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'Households', Agency, and Gentlewomen in Seventeenth-Century England

by

Lorrie Kostelyk

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts

in

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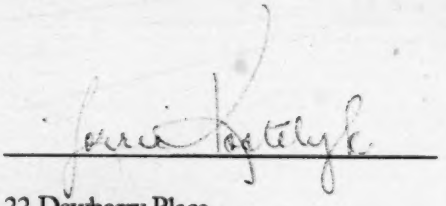

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled 'Households', Agency, and Gentlewomen in Seventeenth-Century England submitted by Lorrie Kostelyk in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in History.

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Acknowledgments

As I come to the end of this thesis project I am *finally* in a position to step back and assess the journey. At the outset, the energy level was high and the brain finely-tuned, however, now the energy stores are depleted and the brain longs for some respite from its mental exercises.

The topic for the thesis was borne out of a number of circumstances and experiences. The idea began to take on its early dimensions some years ago in conjunction with thought-provoking input from my supervisor, Dr. Julian Martin. As time went on, after many lively discussions, the concept emerged in its current form. All along I was in the advantageous position whereby I could draw on Dr. Martin's expertise and direction. I am thankful for his unflagging support and encouragement. He led the way by maintaining a position strides ahead of me and simultaneously placing himself in the aft position so he could 'push me forward' from behind when the situation warranted it.

I am indebted to all those who had input into my life and into the more formal aspects of the thesis project over the duration of the program. I thank you all.

Abstract

The 'Household', in seventeenth-century England, can be best understood as an *institution*: it had a generative, dynamic and constitutive function. In general, historians have preferred to study its component parts in isolation. However, the empirical material from the period buttresses my claim that 'Household' should be analysed within a more synthesised framework. A number of theoretical approaches when woven together reassess several misconceptions about early modern gentlewomen and their agency. 'Household' takes into account both structures and individuals and, therefore, allows us to study the adaptive relationship between the two entities.

This thesis looks at a number of component parts of the 'Household' thus I utilize a broad array of source materials that had been relegated to their respective disciplines. My multi-textured analysis makes use of a number of interpretive devices to redress the imbalance about women's contributions. Looking at mechanisms of how the 'self' is constituted traces how agency is formed and how it functions. Women were not passive spectators nor were they insignificant. Men and women had different but equal responsibilities to themselves, their families and to society as a whole. 'Household' can be seen as a 'theatre' of performance where the interaction of individuals within the structure reveals much about agency and how it was exercised. Women were *active* agents and involved at every level of decision-making in their households: they made significant contributions to their 'Households'.

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Introduction

> ***Historians have generated copious statistical data on quantifiable aspects of the household, but their methodology rules out the pursuit of qualitative questions about how the institution actually operated at the human level.***[1]

This thesis argues that 'Household' is a valuable category of explanation *and* is a primary object of study in and of itself. Such an argument requires we unite within a single explanatory framework a set of topics individually familiar to historians but pursued too often in isolation from each other and therefore with distracting effects. Much historiography has grouped 'household and family' (those who made up the 'unit') together and is primarily concerned with economics and demography. Historians thus tended to focus upon long-term changes and upon issues framed around aggregate productivity, population structures, class hegemony or subordination.[2] An integrated approach to the study of 'Household' would allow us to see it as a *key social institution*. This integration involves political, social, legal and economic historiographies, gender and identity studies and, finally, those concerned with visual and material culture.[3] Integrating the high political narrative with the social and cultural dynamics of society has been a longstanding challenge for historians. A similar challenge exists here.

I aim to look at 'Household' as a generative, dynamic and adaptive institution within which persons actually interacted. It will broaden our understanding of those mutually constitutive relationships if we look, specifically, at the interactive behaviour between individuals and the institutional structures they inhabited. In the early modern period, "politics, economics and culture all converged on and diverged from the 'Household' *because* of the intersection of individuals and institutions."[4] My particular focus for empirical evidentiary reasons will be upon seventeenth-century gentlewomen, their roles, and their responsibilities as active agents. I shall first identify shortcomings of the existing historiography, and remove several conceptual and interpretative ambiguities and, then, offer a positive framework upon which to place the analysis which follows in later chapters. The existing scholarship does not regard 'Household' as a legitimate category for analysis. Instead, a variety of merely plausible objects of study have

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[1] D. Underdown, "The Taming of the Scold: the Enforcement of Patriarchal Authority in Early Modern England," A. Fletcher & J. Stevenson (eds.), *Order & Disorder in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 122.

[2] L. Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy* (Oxford, 1965), and *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (New York, 1977); J. A. Sharpe, *Early Modern England: a social history 1550-1760* (London, 1987); K. Wrightson, *English Society 1580-1680* (London, 1982); P. Laslett, *The World We Have Lost further explored* (New York, 1984) and R. M. Smith (ed.), *Land, Kinship and Lifecycle* (Cambridge, 1984).

[3] There have been some attempts in recent decades to write in a more integrated mode such as A. Hughes (ed.), *Seventeenth Century England: A Changing Culture, volume 1:Primary Sources* (London, 1980) but in this case the book is a source book and not an analysis.

[4] K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain* (New Haven, 2000), p. 42, emphasis mine.

proliferated, none of which are coherently linked together, and none of which adequately captures the reality of gentlewomen's activities in everyday life. Several illogicalities characterize much of the scholarship.

Central among these shortcomings is asymmetry of argument, that is, the distorted forms of explanation and interpretation deployed with respect to women's history (on the one hand) and men's history (on the other).[5] The presumption is ubiquitous that women are subordinated, oppressed, excluded, passive and marginalised (both today and, thus, even more so in the past). Interpretation of their activities in the seventeenth-century is always rooted in this notion.[6] It is routinely held to be the case, moreover, that the locus of this oppression and subordination is the 'domestic sphere', a social and emotional space separate from the 'public sphere' (where it was the men who were active).[7] A symmetrical approach, instead, will require us to identify the activities and roles of gentlemen and gentlewomen in the same Household context (rather than segment them on *a priori* grounds into categories that are, in their very definitions for modern people, gender-exclusive components of a rigid hierarchy of cultural, moral and social authority).

Another inconsistency displayed within the arguments of individual commentators arises from the retrospective importation of modern expectations about gender roles (say) and the over-interpretation (or explaining away) of well-documented instances of women's active agency. A related inconsistency arises when one compares different methodological approaches and theoretical models. 'Family', 'Women's writing', 'material culture', 'patriarchy', 'marriage', 'conduct codes' and 'property rights' are examples of modern areas of debate. Their value as real

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[5]Not only does this asymmetry show itself in explanations or interpretations but sometimes in the source books themselves on which these analyses are based. See for instance, A. Browning, ed., *English Historical Documents: 1660- 1714, vol. VIII* (New York, 1953)which includes political, economic, social, legal and religious documents but out of a total of 404 entries, only three women are named as authors. In addition, any discussion of womens' involvement in any of these categorical areas is negligible. In P. Crawford and L. Gowing, *Women's Worlds in Seventeenth-Century England: a source book* (London, 2000), the documents tend to be categorized into typical abstract categories which limit the understanding of the material.

[6]This interpretation is largely based on 'sparse documentary evidence' which modifies "in some degree the stereotype of marital relations," K. Wrightson, *English Society*, p. 92; he also suggests that "the picture which emerges indicates the *private* existence of a strong complementary and companionate ethos, side by side with, and often overshadowing, theoretical adherence to the doctrine of male authority and *public* female subordination" (p. 92).

[7]A. Wilson (ed.), *Rethinking social history: English society 1570-1920 and its interpretation* (Manchester, 1993), p. 22 explains that 'history from the viewpoint of women' needs to be reoriented along three thematic lines, one of which is concerned with 'public and private' spheres and, specifically, the connection of these two. The other themes are the inclusion of women in arenas where they have previously thought to have played no part such as wars or early modern political thought and, finally, the re-construction of gender and the related explorations of female identity (pp. 22-23).

categories for early modern Englishmen and women is presumed rather than tested.

Related to the latter point, of course, is ambiguity and general confusion that exists over the content of the proposed real objects of historical (as opposed to theoretical) study. That is, what are today (and what were in the past) the necessary manifest properties of, say, 'Family' or 'Patriarchy', actually? And how should these properties be linked to the structures of theories and models? The mismatches are legion. An associated effect, therefore, is the appeal to narrow ranges of empirical materials, few in number and small of scope, and only to those which bolster the initial model. The conviction that modern categories are universal in time (not only in space today) underwrites a deductive (rather than inductive) approach to interpretation of the materials of the past.[8] Making the evidence fit a favoured model is, demonstrably, a temptation few resist when women's historical activity and status is under discussion. Many modern models are themselves component parts of over-arching interpretative commitments to sweeping characterizations of 'the early modern era' and its relation to the origins of Modernity.[9] The risk of exposure to the broad array of documentary material actually available (and applicable) is that certain modern truisms may need to be reassessed or abandoned altogether.[10]

Establishing 'Household' as a primary object of study and a legitimate interpretative category challenges many embedded scholarly practices and expectations. I aim to show that 'Household' better accommodates the evidentiary materials of seventeenth-century lives than has been recognised to date.[11] Moreover, it allows for a more nuanced approach to the study — one that redefines concepts within an early modern cultural context.[12] The thesis has been structured

[8]A. Wilson, and T. G. Ashplant, "Whig History and Present-Centred History," *Historical Journal*, 31 (1988), pp. 1-16 discuss the danger of trying to force the present to fit the past and state that it is only by looking at the source generating process (not just the sources alone) can scholars get answers to the questions they are researching: context is essential, this article identifies the problem of 'tunnel history' whereby the use of a one-categorical system can lead to misinterpretation of empirical evidence, especially if the category is 'guessed' wrongly (pp. 13-15).

[9]K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, states that the early modern period does not "hold the key to the making of that elusive entity 'the modern family'"; nor does it show or is involved in "the *un*making of all that went before, p. 22.

[10]Or, as A. Wilson, *Rethinking Social History*, would characterize this array of problems, the historical research might have to be 'adjusted'. This means that a mismatch may occur between categories, be a problem of provenance or deal with the absence or presence of information that does not 'fit' the questions or the answers (p. 297). We need to modify the working concepts in the practical process of research.

[11]In a warning to the "diligent student," David M. Loades, *Politics and the Nation: England, 1450-1660*, 5th edition (Oxford, 1999), issues a historiographical note of caution: "there are many other agendas, in addition to the well-known 'Whig' and Marxist schools, which cause historians to argue backwards from contemporary priorities," moreover "feminist campaigning" has affected the historiography of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries most obviously (p. 394).

[12]This could be called a solution to the compartmentalization by period and by subject as per K. Wrightson's critique in his chapter, "The enclosure of English social history," in A. Wilson (ed.), *Rethinking social history*, p. 63.

in such a way to capture these nuances while, at the same time, to offer a comprehensive survey of gentlewomen's active agency in the institution of 'Household'. The first Chapter identifies the problems inherent in the political, economic and cultural historiography of seventeenth-century society. Following that critique, in Chapter Two I assert a positive historiographical prescriptive model that describes a multi-disciplinary, multi-source approach to address current shortcomings. This is done by integrating a number of theoretical models to serve as the foundation for my analysis and by using empirical material from a range of sources to redress the misconception that women's roles and responsibilities within the 'Household' were narrow and less valuable than were those of men. In the next three Chapters, I have demonstrated the dynamism and agency of gentlewomen in their 'Households'. Beginning with a broad, external view of the 'Household' (its structure and framework), the analysis focusses initially on the structure itself and how the individuals function within it. Following that, the focus narrows to look more closely at the relationship dynamics of women and the connection of those intricately woven networks to the 'Household'. The last Chapter reveals how women have both informed and responded to societal views on the construction of self-identity and self-performance.

This thesis seeks to abandon ideological and traditional preoccupations regarding seventeenth-century women and their 'Households'. It suggests a new approach to historical knowledge that incorporates cultural texts, architectural theory, poems, plays, diaries, legal documents and visual representations. My study looks at the interplay between structure and process and within that, the role of women's agency and activity in early modern England. It necessarily addresses larger historical issues such as patriarchy, gender, identity and authority. In short, it offers a 'braided narrative' or 'thick description' of one of the fundamental institutions, that of 'Household'.[13] Moreover, this 'braided' perspective of mine is a step forward from the approach of 'adjectival histories', with their inherent failure to recognize the interrelatedness of the past.[14]

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[13]Terminology comes from P. Burke, *Social History and Theory* (Ithaca, New York: 1992), p. 163 and C. Geertz, *Interpretation of Culture: selected essays* (New York, 1973).
[14]A. Wilson (ed.),*Re-thinking Social History*, p. 20.

Chapter One *Problems with the concept of 'Household'*

Whenever there is any discussion of economy, family, and social structure, women are invariably positioned as either oppressed, incapacitated or confined (or all of these!). Because of these restrictions, it has been argued that women are incapable of exercising any authority or power in their day to day lives. Those lives inevitably revolved around the household, meaning the interior, domestic space of the rooms that make up the actual building.

> The restriction to the household (and the restriction of the household itself) was perhaps the most important because it limited their social contacts, confined their economic activities to a circle dictated by men, and gave them all the problems associated with work to which there is no particular beginning and no particular end.[1]

This assessment paints a bleak and inaccurate picture of the life of women in the seventeenth century. Feminist scholarship, in particular, adheres to the belief that women are subordinated to men and that this is a universally accepted (and obvious) fact. In the past there were a number of factors which reinforced this notion about women's subordination and they have been adhered to over the course of many centuries. Supposedly, one cannot deny the existence of this clear division nor can one can escape from the set of circumstances that society has created to keep women in this perpetual state. This prison-like existence is deemed to be inevitable for women and, in fact, is deemed universal across all time and place. "Feminist concerns are international" as one book states on its back cover.[2]

Who says, though, that gentlewomen in seventeenth-century England viewed themselves as trapped and relegated to the domestic world alone as if this was an unfair arrangement? It is true that "household organization is fundamental to ideologies of womanhood, and the reality that households are, in material terms, the context for much of women's lives,"[3] but that does not necessarily mean that women felt restricted to that place. This author cautions against arguing the women will be liberated, or given agency, once they move out of the domestic sphere.[4] Yet, for many feminist theoreticians and historians, this has been the 'end point' or the goal that women have been moving towards over the centuries. According to them, women should aspire to free themselves from the bondage and boundaries of the domestic (that is, the private) realm, and move into the public realm where men exist and

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[1] A. Laurence, *Women in England, 1500 - 1760: a social history* (London, 1994), p. xii.
[2] K. Young, C. Wolkowitz and R. McCullagh (eds.), *Of Marriage and the Market; women's subordination in international perspective* (London, 1981).
[3] O. Harris, "Households as Natural Units," in *Marriage and the Market*, p. 52.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 64.

function. Much of the secondary material attempts to trace the origins of women 'breaking free' of their domestic spaces and their moving into the broader public sphere and it emphasizes this movement as inevitable reaction to the oppression that women had endured for so long in an outdated patriarchal society.[5] Let us turn now to specific problems in the historiographical material.

Asymmetry of Argument

The secondary sources demonstrate a misconception of the place, that is the 'Household', which women inhabit. The structure of the household (in the very narrow sense of the word) as well as the activities within it have been categorized as binding for women and, moreover, the activities themselves have not been fully understood. "The development of the household in which women did little but control the domestic arrangements gave them the opportunity to shine at being good housewives and managers, but deprived them of the opportunity to do anything else."[6] This statement is typical of the misinformed notion that women's roles were narrow and insignificant especially when compared against the 'important' roles of men of the time. The present lack of value and appreciation of the work that women purportedly did ties neatly into the rest of feminist theory that "[their] history is a rather more seamless garment than many other people's history."[7]

It is essential to some feminist historians to trace a continuous line of oppression and restriction for women in history, thereby perpetuating the problem most notably of gender asymmetry. In other words, women and men have separate histories and they are not of equal significance. This is completely untrue and can be seen, for instance, when we look at the decades from the 1640s through the 1660s: a time of instability and upheaval in society. During these years men and women alike were affected by the changes, as they were touched in their everyday lives and all roads of experience converged in one place, albeit in varying degrees, on the 'Household'.

Gentlewomen in the seventeenth century did not make the distinction between the public and private spheres in the same way that people did from the nineteenth century

[5] See for instance, A. Clark, *Working Lives of Women in the Seventeenth Century*, or S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720* (Oxford, 1998), especially the discussion of Space, p. 205 and the section on Occupational Identities and Social Roles, chapter 6.
[6] A. Laurence, *Women in England*, p. xii.
[7] *Ibid.*

onwards.[8] In the early modern period, women were regarded as "scarcely less absolute than [their] lord and master, and probably more despotic in [their] relations with [their] subjects, [they] ruled supreme over the servants, the house and all those offices which contributed to its proper provisioning."[9] Obviously, there were many 'offices' open to women in the running of the 'Household' and it is necessary to investigate what these might have been in order to get the entire picture of what women's roles and responsibilities of the time were. This type of query will call into question vague assertions such as, "public and private matters were organized somewhat differently than now but with distinctions that were just as obvious and definitive."[10] I contend that public and private distinctions did not exist at all in the way that our contemporary society views them and, moreover, the distinctions were virtually non-existent to persons of the seventeenth century.

Looking at distinctions between private and public spheres links us with another problem in the historiography, namely the 'distinction' that some scholars make between men's and women's separate histories.[11] Not only should we begin to modify our views concerning women and their 'own' history, but also no longer should we adhere to the outdated belief that women have been hidden from the historical narrative.[12] When we consider the subject of 'Household', we can see that the empirical sources tell us that they have been on an equitable ranking with men because the 'job description' is largely the same. Gentlewomen had to run large households, and note that this is in the plural because in many cases the family owned more than one estate. The way of life was similar for bourgeois city workers who ran their households and family businesses in a similar manner. Duties included supervising the servants, tracking inventory, running any farm business (ie dairy), educating the children, sewing and caring for the linen, and resolving and maintaining personal relationships among family and other household members.

Because the gentlewomen were responsible for estate management when the men were

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[8]For a thorough historiographical review of 'separate spheres' see, A. Vickery, "Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History," *Historical Journal*, 36 (1993), pp. 383-414.
[9]R. Bradley, *The English Housewife in the Seventeenth & Eighteenth Centuries* (London, 1912), p. 27.
[10]*Ibid.*, p. 140.
[11]The way a book is divided into chapters can be problematic, for instance, "In the Beginning: male and female," in N. H. Keeble's *The Cultural Identity of Seventeenth-Century Woman: a reader* (London, 1994) beings with the differences between men and women and these distinctions serve as the foundation for the rest of the book.
[12]R. Bridenthal, S. Mosher Stuard and M. E. Wiesner (eds.), *Becoming Visible: Women in European History* third edition (Boston, New York, 1998). The title says it all in addition to the dedication: "to the women's movement to which this book owes its own visibility."

away either at legal business, court, Parliament, or in some cases, war, they had to be familiar (that is, practised) at account keeping. When keeping accounts of 'Household' (including estate matters) expenses, both men and women kept their own books.[13] One never knew when tragedy or fortune would strike. "Even in normal times, as widows and guardians of heirs, women could be solely responsible for the preservation and improvement of the family estates."[14] Men and women alike were expected to put the family first in all things and to nurture the children in such a way that they would grow up to emulate their parents' example. Childbirth and child rearing is viewed at least as much a fact of biology and not a scheme by men to keep women restricted. Contrary to the existing feminist perspective, in particular, these things do not have to be considered as a negative attribute. Moreover, that part of a woman's life was not the sole purpose nor the only role of her life in the period under scrutiny. As far as responsibility for child rearing went, both parents had identical weight of responsibilities towards family when it came to taking care of the business of running the 'Household', that is, managing the family business. If we think of 'Household' as the locus of life for both men and women then it is more problematic to say that women were created for "domestical and houshold affaires" and that they should carry the home around as a snail or tortoise wears his shell.[15]

This separation of men and women and their respective roles in society shows up frequently in the secondary material. Philip Jenkins discusses only 'the idea of a gentleman' and leaves any discussion of women entirely. Similarly, Alan Simpson profiles three men and compares their experiences to one another as if the word 'gentry' applied only to men. He implied that gentlewomen, mentioned rarely in the book, were good for acquiring land but had no other role. Ironically, despite his statement his book cites examples to the contrary. In one case, the wife (not named) of Sir Robert Drury wrote to him to discuss the possibility of a man renting one of their farms. By doing this, she showed her involvement in the management, and specifically, the decision-making role, in farm business.[16] Simpson's book is categorized as economic history yet it still seems to leave women out of the picture when it comes to day to day management of property and finances of the estate. In an expense chart (found in the book) one entry shows money paid to the Lady and the accompanying explanation in the ledger about

[13]For one example of this see, R. Bradley, *The English Housewife,* where she discusses the account books of a Sussex squire and Lady Grisell Baillie (p. 246).
[14]S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England,* p. 310.
[15]T. Gataker, *A mariage praier,* p. 21 quoted in R. Warnicke, "Private and Public: The Boundaries of Women's Lives in Early Stuart England," *Privileging Gender in Early Modern England,* ed., J. R. Brink (Missouri, 1993), p. 133.
[16]A. Simpson, *The Wealth of the Gentry 1540-1660* (Cambridge, 1963), p. 210.

further details as, "more laid out by my lady as per her book."[17] This suggests she has some record keeping system of her own that ties into the general accounts. Simpson stated, "it was presumably someone's business to record disbursements as they were made day by day, and then to consolidate them periodically," but because in his study of one small estate, he cannot find the records he dismisses the important role that could have been conceivably carried out by the wife.[18] Then he stated that on a large estate the responsibility of such business was that the 'steward of the household' and from one example Simpson supposed this was the general type of person to do this instead of, perhaps, the wife.

The archival material shows that women had many opportunities for other pursuits outside of the traditional domestic ('private') realm and it is common to find material concerning household and estate management that shows little or no difference in content whether written by men or women. However, the secondary literature varies in its support of these examples. G. E. Mingay's *The Gentry* presents a thorough social-economic explanation of estate management and how women had a role in running the family business. Her duties were "not exclusively the responsibility of the male members of gentry families," and that "estate affairs were *often* temporarily or permanently in the hands of wives, daughters, or widows."[19] In spite of this declaration, women are still somehow treated as peripheral agents when in fact, the supposed exception proves to be the rule. The experiences in the Civil Wars are frequently used as examples of exceptional behaviour but if one looks closely, other examples from peaceful times are consistent with the war years. The Paxton family of Norfolk records an example of a wife who "with great ability took charge of affairs and managed the property."[20] Mingay said that it would be helpful to know more about the role of the gentry's womenfolk because we could appreciate such comments such as was paid by Sir John Oglander to his wife

> I could never have done it without a most careful wife who was no spender, never wore a silk gown but for her credit when she went abroad, and never to please herself. She was up every day before me and oversaw all the outhouses, she would not trust her maid with directions but would wet her shoes to see it done herself.[21]

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[17] *Ibid.*, p. 16; the chart covers the years 1609-1610.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[19] G. E. Mingay, *The Gentry: The Rise and Fall of a Ruling Class* (London, 1976), p. 89; italics mine.
[20] *Ibid.* See also, S. Davies, *Unbridled Spirits: women of the English Revolution 1640-1660* (London, 1998); A. Plowden, *The Women of the English Civil War* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1998).
[21] F. Bamford, *A Royalist's Notebook: The Commonplace Book of Sir John Oglander* (London, 1936), p. 151.

Contemporary bias and the problems of incoherence

Time and time again, the arguments of the secondary commentators present inherent contradictions. When they do this they reveal their misconceptions of the roles of both men and women in seventeenth-century society especially with respect to their job descriptions in the context of 'Household.' Even before establishing their own households, women were given authority to make decisions regarding their marriage partner.[22] In their households, wives were given considerable authority. They had control of the religious and domestic education of their young children...they also supervised the training and work of all females, their servants as well as their offspring. Husbands, on the other hand, took care of the male servants and for the most part left the wives to their own responsibilities. "Besides attending holy services, family business might well take wives, with their husband's permission into the public arena to sue for their family's estate, to purchase property, or to transact other private business."[23] How then is this different to what has been typically been presented as 'men's work? Take the example of Sir Kenelm Digby, who was fond of trying new recipes and who included in his book, "Closet Opened", a number of new recipes from ladies of his acquaintance, one of them, Lady Fanshawe shared her manner of fattening her poultry.[24]

Regarding legal matters and the lack of 'rights' of women at the time, one author stated that even in the twentieth century, women are still at a "profound economic, social and political disadvantage" even though technically all overt legal restrictions that were present in the seventeenth century have been removed.[25] "How did early modern women survive when not only were their wages significantly lower than men, and the common law only allowed them to inherit land if they had no brothers, under a system of primogeniture?"[26] This type of question shows a lack of understanding of women's agency in the period because women both owned land and controlled some of which they did not technically own.[27] Amy Erickson's book, like others, attempts to reconstruct the lives of 'ordinary' women by comparing property laws with everyday

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[22]E. Godfrey, *Home Life Under the Stuarts 1603-1649* (London, 1925), p. 126; at the very least, women were given the right of veto. Also, the claim is made that "sons were hardly less at the will of their fathers than daughters" (p. 141).

[23]R. Warnicke, "Private and Public," p. 135.

[24]R. Bradley, *English Housewife*, p. 88; she has no footnotes in her book for references.

[25]A. Erickson, *Women & Property in Early Modern England* (London, 1993), p.3.

[26]*Ibid.*

[27]"As wives and heiresses, women played a major role in the accumulation and transfer of property....an unusually great amount of land changed ownership through female inheritance," R. H. Michel, "English Attitudes towards Women, 1640-1700," *Canadian Journal of History*, 13 (1978), p. 54.

experiences of inheritance, marriage and widowhood. It is strange that these types of analyses assume that women did not own property or have a say over its transfer when, in many cases, they did. In general, much of the writing is contradictory because in this case, the author writes "it is clear that these ladies and gentle-women were personally involved in the financial management of the combined marital property."[28] Moreover, it is the general conclusion of more than one book that "financial management preoccupied many wealthy women."[29]

There are documented cases of husbands allowing their wives to inherit and manage the money. Another thing to note here (because it makes its appearance as a criticism over and over in the secondary literature) is that the majority of the extant records that exist trace only the elite class. This may be true but we must realize, too, that the law applied to everyone and all secondary sources use these records to some degree or another to justify their conclusions about the majority of the population. Erickson stated in her conclusion that even women who could not read or write used marriage settlements (not only the landed class) thereby contradicting her statement that what goes on in the landed families is exclusive of what goes on in the practice of the other classes.[30]

Many secondary sources indicate that the history of women in the early modern period has been told as one of exclusion and inequality. According to those authors, women were excluded from property owning and given little responsibility for the management of the family on a day to day basis. However, these are misconceptions. It is blatantly false to state that "marriage settlements were negotiated between the bride's father and the groom or his father, women not participating in the arrangements."[31] Nor is it correct to assume solely that wealth was traced from father to eldest son. As with other scholars, Erickson contradicts herself when she concludes that her research showed that in early modern England daughters inherited from their parents on a remarkably equitable basis with their brothers.[32] Statements like these leave us with the impression that women were left out of the picture almost entirely when it came to dealing with family concerns. Furthermore, it appears that the costs of raising boys and girls were

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[28] A. Erickson, *Women & Property*, p. 12.
[29] S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, p. 312.
[30] A. Erickson, *Women & Property*, p. 226.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 5; see examples to the contrary in D. J. H. Clifford, ed., *The Diaries of Lady Anne Clifford* (London, 1991), D. G. Greene, ed., *The Meditations of Lady Elizabeth Delaval* (London, 1978), A. Thornton, *The Autobiography of Alice Thornton* (London, 1875) and A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination in England 1500-1800* (New Haven, 1995).
[32] A. Erickson, *Women & Property*, p. 19.

identical and when it came to distributing the patrimony, fathers normally gave their daughters shares comparable in value with those of their brothers although girls usually inherited personal property and boys more often real property.[33] Women clearly gave preference to their female relatives in dividing their property. So then, we can make a distinction between 'equal' treatment (which is not so important) and 'equitable' treatment (meaning that in the end, sons and daughters had the same share, albeit not in the same form).

If women were marginalised or devalued in the roles and responsibilities then it becomes easier to understand how some scholars can connect this 'separation' to the notions of private and public realms which men and women exclusively inhabited.[34] This brings to the fore another related problem in the historiography, the gap that exists between the real accounts and those of the 'prescriptive' literature, that is the sources that are used to back the argument that men designed the authoritative system and found ways to enforce it. "One of the main thrusts of didactic literature on women's behaviour of the early modern [and of the medieval] period was that women ought to keep themselves indoors and men ought to busy themselves with matters outdoors."[35] It is obviously crucial for feminist historians to fix the origin of this division in the early modern period, along with other supposed changes in the family structure and emotional bonding (to name just two).[36] As Georges Duby has pointed out, a historian can, for example, apply the concept of class struggle to the feudal era or, as Duby himself has done, apply the idea of privacy to the medieval period but in doing this, historians must be careful because of the tendency to make broad, sweeping conclusions about change over time. What this type of approach can result in is a revelation about relations within the social systems.[37]

Gender studies, which are a crucial part of looking at women's roles, use conduct books like *The English Housewife* to illustrate the distinct roles of women. They also point to the discrepancy between the prescriptive advice on how to run the household and the reality of practice–that is, the incoherence between the two extremes. That type of book ties the virtues or

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[33]K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, discusses this aspect of inheritance in terms of 'equal but different' shares.
[34]In taking all this under consideration, however, one has to be careful not to let the imbalance shift too far the other way when the analysis is taken only from a 'female' point of view as in Anne Laurence's book of vanguard social history, *Women in England*. In her book, Laurence covered many aspects of women' lives (cultural, legal, physical, religious), but to the exclusion of figuring in the men thereby limiting the conclusions to be one-sided or partial.
[35]A. Erickson, p. 9; A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination*, deals with this dilemma repeatedly throughout his book but fails to reconcile the problem adequately.
[36]Along the lines of this argument regarding distinct spheres is another one that says that the idea of privacy was founded in this period; however, the idea of privacy actually emerged in England in the nineteenth century.
[37]G. Duby, *A History of Private Life: Revelations of the Medieval World* (Massachusetts, 1988), p. ix.

honour of women to their tasks by looking at their private relationships and sexuality. Men's values, on the other hand, are tied to their public image and reputation. We need to look at whether these distinctions are legitimate and how they affect ideas about gender formation. Some secondary works present a more equitable division regarding the gendering of male and female roles in society. "Although men and women worked in separate spheres, each sex was regarded as sovereign in its own domain, and each half of the partnership was deemed essential to the family economy."[38] Women may have lacked formal political power or agency but they had authority in other culturally-recognized ways. In contrast to other scholars, Mendelson explained that gender entailed certain common experiences which transcended class differences.[39] We have to ask, then, was gender or class the principle criterion which affected women's roles and of what significance is this to the 'Household'?

The discussion of the distinction between private and public worlds must be taken in proper measure and placed within the proper context with regard to English seventeenth-century society. Trying to distinguish between the two is distracting and not critical for the subject of 'Household'. We can see how absurd the point can get by reading the following description of the dilemma for women: "the simultaneous injunction to stay indoors and to provide for the household by going outside of it is simply a trap, hanging the threat of misdeed over the head of any woman outside her front door."[40] As with any other search for 'origins' of something, such as the distinction between private and public realms, periodization is problematic. As Roger Chartier pointed out, periodization that is appropriate for political, social, economic and even cultural history is not appropriate for the history of *mentalitès* (his concern).[41] This caution can be applied to the study of 'Household' because it will illuminate the need to modify the periodization of the early modern period, and especially the seventeenth century. The early modern period witnessed "so many changes in material and spiritual life, in relations between the individual and the state, and in the family that we must treat [it] as something autonomous and original."[42] The period should not be 'made-to-fit' into a teleology of female

[38] S. Mendelson, *The Mental World of Stuart Women: Three Studies* (Sussex, 1987), p. 2.
[39] *Ibid.*, p. 6.
[40] A. Erickson, *Women & Property*, p. 11; see also L. Pollock, "Living on the Stage of the World: The Concept of Privacy Among the Elite of Early Modern England," in A. Wilson (ed.), *Rethinking Social History*, who states that the concept of privacy did not exist in this period.
[41] R. Chartier, *A History of Private Life: Passions of the Renaissance* (Massachusetts, 1989), p. 2.
[42] *Ibid.*; he explains that the early modern period was related to the Middle Ages and that it evolved out of it but we must be careful not to see its place as the precursor of the modern period, either; "it was something unique, neither a continuation of the Middle Ages nor an adumbration of the future" (p. 2).

oppression or a development of private and public spheres.

According to a wide range of empirical sources, no such distinction between private and public existed in terms of household, estate and family management in early modern England. Men and women shared duties and divided them up according to personality, aptitude and particular circumstances (such as when the husband was away for much of the time as was customary for many). Regarding some improvements on their estate, a gentleman wrote to his wife saying, "I need not send to know how my buildings go forward, for I am sure you are so good a housewife you may be trusted with them."[43] It is sometimes hard to get beyond the connotations that certain words have in our contemporary society but it is necessary to be able to do so. What if 'housewife' imparted an entirely different meaning? Such is suggested by this confident statement by the husband. In it, he assumes that her skill level in such a role embraces the job description of one who is capable of overseeing building improvements.

The word, 'housewife', then, as well as the words 'private' and 'public' can divert us from the real object of study. In the case of social historiography, especially, a related problem of semantics exists. Words such as 'family' and 'household' are used but a consensus has not been reached about their exact definition. 'Household' has not yet been studied as an institution although it has been recognised as the building which housed the family members. The 'family' as a unit has been the more popular topic of study for numerous reasons. Family and kinship studies are well known in historical studies but once we venture forth from the realm of economic historical analysis, correlations and conclusions about how the 'Household' and its family functioned are limited. When discussing household and family, it should be noted that the terms can vary from historian to historian, as well as between anthropologists and sociologists. "In the seventeenth century a man's family meant, not his children merely, but all his household...and for the welfare of all these, spiritual and moral as well as material, the master held himself responsible."[44] Peter Laslett explicitly states that according to him, family does not mean a network of kinship, although to seventeenth century men and women, this was exactly the context in which they understood the word.[45] Lawrence Stone, on the other hand, defines a multitude of forms of 'family' and treats 'household' as a separate entity. He also discusses the

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[43]B. Lewalski, "The Lady of the Country-House Poem," G. Jackson-Stops, G. Schochet, L. C. Olin and E. B. Blair (eds.) *The Fashioning and Functioning of the British Country House* (Washington, D. C.,1989), p. 263.
[44]E. Godfrey, *Home Life*, p. 209.
[45]P. Laslett, *The World We Have Lost: Further Explored* (New York, 1984).

relationship between family and kin and explains how the network functions.[46] Patrick Collinson, by contrast, explained that the family and household are 'virtually' synonymous terms.[47] In general, economically-based studies have tended to leave out the human element or ascribed a blurring of identities because they were rendered without individuality and thus, had value only as a set of numbers. However, this posed a problem because "a much more numerous and varied crowd of people witnessed or disrupted intimate life in those days than in our own times," making it important to include them in any cultural picture we may be sketching.[48] In other words, there is no consensus on the content of any of these categories.

Another word that crops up in most of the secondary material that deals with 'Household' and 'family' is 'patriarchy'. This word clearly illustrates the problems associated with incoherence or, as some see it, the gap that exists between the real (that is, the actual practice of everyday behaviour) and the ideal or abstract (the one that is formulated on the basis of prescriptive literature). In the latter, the patriarchal system is perceived to have forced people into submission and to have indoctrinated and, subsequently, trained men and women into values and practices that cannot be modified or dismantled. Not surprisingly, the empirical evidence strongly suggests that in real practice, strict adherence to the patriarchal system in its ideal form, was few and far between. Moreover, the range of secondary sources display considerable difficulty in explaining how the system was structured and how it functioned in an everyday context. When it comes to studying men's and women's roles in relation to the management of 'Household' in seventeenth-century English society, exploring the gap between the 'real' and 'ideal' of patriarchal practice becomes essential.

The term patriarchalism is often used by scholars as a description of a social environment which is hostile and oppressive to women. The perception looking back into the past is that any independent activities of women other than their domestic ('private'), nurturing roles were typically regarded with suspicion and strongly discouraged or maybe even forbidden. "This sense of patriarchalism as a historical condition is the backbone of much feminist criticism, a potent force in literary and social studies" and, because of this, "it is important to recognize the extent to which current theories and images of women's lives in seventeenth-century England depend on

[46]L. Stone, *Sex, Family and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (New York, 1977). See also, L. G. Schwoerer, "Seventeenth-Century English Women Engraved in Stone?," *Albion* 16 (1984), pp. 389-403 for a critique of Stone's conclusions.

[47]P. Collinson, *Birthpangs of Protestant England: religious and cultural change in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (New York, 1988), p. 60.

[48]E. Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family* (New York, 1975), p. 38.

this one word, 'patriarchalism', which is very widely used, but, like the equivalent Marxist term 'bourgeois,' seldom defined."[49] Lawrence Stone thought of patriarchy as a real practice that did not give agency to women in the management of the household. He discussed women in the context of authority, obedience and subordination and he labelled the family structure in the seventeenth century as 'restrictive patriarchalism' meaning that the control that men exercised in society effectively limited the activities and status of the women. Frequently in the secondary sources a writer will offer a disclaimer when the gap between the real and ideal of the patriarchal system become apparent and Stone did this, too:

> in any familial relationship, the degree of affective bonding and the distribution of power over decision-making will, in the last resort, depend on the personal characters of the husband and the wife. All that is being claimed is that at this particular period in history, law, custom, state propaganda, moral theology and family tradition all conspired to create a set of internalized values and expectations.[50]

Notwithstanding his previous restrictive remarks, Stone also said that this patriarchal family 'phase' was only a temporary one.[51] When there is no firm understanding of the system then there has to be a way to give leeway to all extremes in order to make it fit the empirical evidence.

The discussion of patriarchy is especially problematic when considering the discrepancies that exist between the real and ideal, creating a 'gap' when it comes to everyday experience of both men *and* women. Historians, anthropologists, and literary scholars have tried to understand this perplexing, paradoxical gap. It is a common occurrence to see this gap as being associated with women, specifically with issues about their agency and their writing, mainly because there exists a lack of understanding about the subject under discussion. Some authors attempt to explain the problem away by saying that men did most of the writing about women in an attempt to dictate the limits of their agency. Again, this is the men in 'public' subordinating women to the 'private' spaces.[52] To address this shortcoming, Laslett tried to blend economic and sociological theory in an attempt to unravel the mystery surrounding the discrepancy between prescription and practice. A woman, he said, could be at once equal and subordinate, economically equal (because she was a partner to the husband) and yet socially and culturally

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[49]M. J. M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife: Literary Evidence and the History of the Family* (Chapel Hill, 1987), p. 3.
[50]L. Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 217.
[51]*Ibid.*, p. 218.
[52]See for instance, J. L. Klein, *Daughters, Wives and Widows: Writings by Men about Women and Marriage in England, 1500–1640* (Chicago, 1992), where in her preface, Klein explains that women's voice did not extend beyond the private sphere and that we have to rely on mens' writing to understand relationships at the time. However, she does state in a footnote that some other authors (K. Wrightson, C. L. Powell and A. Macfarlane) seem to acknowledge that a gap existed in the literature and actual practice (p. xiv n.6).

subordinate (because she was a wife, a mother and a woman).[53]

Sensing a need to broaden the scope of what constitutes 'family' and 'Household', Linda Pollock highlights the need to see these two entities in terms of the relationships between all the members of the family. This means looking at how ideals and the reality of patriarchy functioned with siblings as well as with just the parents. "Patriarchy was so long-lasting not because its harsh structures were softened by affection but because the system contained within it the necessary structures for mitigation."[54] According to Pollock, the hallmarks of the patriarchal system were, reason, authority and judgement. She shows that the patriarchal system allowed for conflicting interests to be taken into account (mitigated) and for the calibration of how much deference to accord in resolving these differences in order to protect the future welfare of the individual. Those involved, men and women, parents and children alike, knew exactly how much they could press the limits of the system to their advantage: men and women, parents and children alike. "Relationships between and among family members were not stagnant and were not uniform."[55] This may be true, however, how far should we go in order to save theory? Is not the institution of patriarchy inherently a 'total' one where everyone is conditioned and escape is not possible?[56] These questions need to be explored and answered in a way that fits with the existing contemporary empirical evidence as well as with the prescriptive literature.

A topic closely related to patriarchy and, in fact, much secondary writing on women, is gender. Much of the writing of women's and gender history leaves the impression that women are best understood in terms of her life-cycle: birth, marriage, child-bearing, widowhood and death. Many books present the story of early modern women in this way. Some writers defend the division of their books into three traditional segments of female status (maid, wife, and widow) because they underscore women's enforced dependance in society at the time. In one book, the author's whole premise is that looking at the life cycle (of both men and women) is the best approach because these moments are the fundamental features in rural society.[57] This may be a portion of the 'fundamental features' of the society, but they are certainly not the only (nor even the most comprehensive) way to understand it. When 'life cycle' divisions are used an asymmetrical imbalance is created and too much emphasis is placed on a women's biology alone.

[53]P. Laslett (ed.), *Household and Family in Past Time* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 2.
[54]L. Pollock, "Rethinking Patriarchy and the Family in Seventeenth-Century England," *Journal of Family History*, 23 (1998), p. 3.
[55]*Ibid.*, p. 20.
[56]On total institutions, see E. Goffman, *Asylums* (Harmondsworth,1961).
[57]R. Smith, *Land, Kinship and Life-Cycle.*

In addition, women's work, her roles and responsibilities are understood in much too narrow a context and we have returned again to 'separate histories' of men and women. One recent source book still adheres to a 'traditional' approach with chapters divided according to life-cycle, 'disorder'-'deviance' and 'response to oppression' studies. Some of the chapters found here are typical of this genre and include: religion, bodies, work, marriage, sexual experience, politics and protests. The assembly of source materials tries to blend gender studies with current feminist theory in order to explore the everyday experience of a wide range of women. The justification for this organizational structure is the claim that it is the biological differences that are the essential markers of sexual difference for early modern society.[58] Moreover, it was supposedly on these differences that value systems were constructed and societies' models were based. Again, this tells only a part of the reality of the cultural system and assumes is that it functioned certain ways. It assumes a society characterized by a type of gender 'apartheid' whereas, for instance, in the legal system men and women were treated the same in terms of motives and, thus, outcomes of the process. And regarding legal rights, it was technically true that women were barred from holding public office but they were not prohibited from being involved in legal matters. "As the wife, child, or other kin of an officeholder, they might indirectly influence public action through manipulation of the male relatives."[59] In other cases, women initiated and pursued legal matters directly, primarily those dealing with financial concerns such as property rights for either themselves or their children.

Source materials

The shortcomings discussed up to this point all converge on the selection of the empirical materials used by scholars. What resources to use is a decision that has to be made by individual authors and the decision is often contentious and, more importantly, the range of resources used can impair the analysis itself. For instance, one of the reasons that women have been assumed to have been kept in the private realm comes from a restricted use of sources typically used to reconstruct the distinctions in women's everyday life. Women did publish on occasion but usually they confined their writing to diaries, religious journals or letters that circulated amongst family and friends. According to some scholars, these letters showed a more

[58] L. Gowing and P. Crawford (eds.), *Women's Worlds*, p. 2.
[59] R. Warnicke, "Private and Public", p. 134.

public but simultaneously a less self-conscious face.[60] One example of this from the Civil War period is when Lady Brilliana Harley's writing about a day that the Parliamentary forces were under attack and then the following day writing about sending pies and dried apples to her son at Oxford. This 'two-sided' role of Lady Harley does not necessarily reflect a split in private and public 'duties' or 'identity'.[61] What is does reflect is the complexity of a woman's role, how at once she is a mother, wife, and simultaneously a participant-observer of a Civil War which is being raged on her. In another example, Dorothy Osborne is characterized as a woman who is chatty, catty, earnest and very much in love so therefore quite self-absorbed and one who inhabited a 'private world'. Erickson, citing these examples and others in her book, states that "all of these women were very well-to-do and not overburdened with domestic cares or children at the time they wrote," when, in fact, this is far from the truth.[62]

Other 'evidence' of the division between private and public realms occurs in women's 'private' writings. The use of the word 'private' privileges diaries, religious meditations and correspondence and does not include account books, household, estate transactions or servant management. By looking at the range of writings by men and women in the period it does not seem logical to use one form and ignore the other. Seventeenth-century men and women made frequent use of the autobiographical form of writing and the secondary sources offer various explanations for the reason for its popularity. Women found the form useful for a number of reasons, one being the Protestant emphasis on self-examination, another because of women's limited access to classical literature but, most significantly for this discussion, it was the association of feminine experience with the domestic or social sphere.[63] Lady Anne Halkett's memoirs focussed on the turbulent years of the Interregnum. During this period, Anne was actively involved in the Royalist cause (she helped the Duke of York escape from St. James Palace in 1648) as well as in securing her future through three courtships. Is it reasonable to call these different aspects of her life 'public' and 'private'? In one analysis of Anne, the author insists

[60]See for example, Lord Basil Fielding and Lady Elizabeth Denbigh's correspondence in C. Denbigh (ed.), *Roundhead Father and Roundhead Son*, chapter IX (London, 1915).
[61]B. Harley, *The Letters of Brilliana Harley* (London, 1854) contains many examples of this supposed paradox.
[62]A. Erickson, *Women & Property*, p. 12. Dorothy Osborne once travelled with her future husband and brother during the Civil War and voluntarily took the blame for some anti-Parliamentarian writing that her brother had written on a window where they were eating in order to spare him possible repercussions. As she had suspected, the enemy had no reason to think she was even aware of what she had (supposedly) written and therefore, the entire incident was forgotten.
[63]See H. Dragstra, S. Ottway and H. Wilcox (eds.), *Betraying Our Selves: Forms of Self-representation in Early Modern English Texts* (London, 2000).

on seeing these different lives yet concedes the pertinent point that the two were "closely interwoven."[64] Moreover, Anne's autobiography is described as conveying a "sense of intimacy, subjectivity and domesticity," yet later this is contested by another description that her words are said to have been "a celebration of the independence and self-determination of [the] protagonist."[65] Trying to divide everyday life into private and public realms is clearly artificial and problematic.

One way to correct the problem of using a narrow range of empirical material is to broaden the range and include the use of visual source materials in historical analyses.[66] Looking at extensive collections of letters of a family and their network, "good average specimens of hundreds of men and women of their age", has intrinsic value. This type of research means that "we come nearer to the ordinary public opinion and social standards of their day than by reading of those exceptionally great men who only partially represent their age and yet which history has brought before us almost exclusively."[67] However, the author just quoted used not only letters but also portraits of the family to present a more comprehensive 'picture' of the history of the family. This approach, where visual culture is incorporated into the analysis of culture, should be used whenever possible and especially when dealing with 'Household' as a subject of analysis (as we shall see).[68] One of the most important features of the early modern period was the development of a new conception of daily life and a new way of organizing it. Visual sources help us see these changes. "Living became a matter of externalizing one's inner life and private values" and it makes sense to observe that the values found their way onto canvases of individuals, their families and their possessions.[69] More attention was paid to the daily business of the life of the 'Household' and this was reflected in the art of the day through depictions of sophistication in everyday life.

Visual culture is linked by theorists with notions about public and private spaces as well. One might be able to see the rise of individualism along with the need for privacy not as a gender

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[64] S. Ottway, "They Only Lived Twice: public and private selfhood in the autobiographies of Anne, Lady Halkett and Colonel Joseph Bampfield," in *Betraying Our Selves*, p.138.

[65] *Ibid.*

[66] By 'narrow' I mean limited to one form or another of materials (as were the cases cited above).

[67] F. P. Verney, *Memoirs of the Verney Family during the Civil War: compiled from the letters and illustrated by the portraits at Claydon House*, vol. 1 (London, 1892), p. xii.

[68] As will be discussed in more detail later, portraits were considered to be important because of their representation of the sitter and their surroundings. In one letter from Lady Sussex to her brother Sir Ralph Verney, she complained about the likeness that Van Dyck had rendered in her painting. She complained that he made her look too fat and didn't show her dress to its best advantage, *Ibid.*, p. 258.

[69] R. Chartier, *A History of Private Life*, p. 6.

issue but one of individual men and women seeking identity. An individual's connection to the family was changing in the period and often their visual representation was shown in relationship to their family. Moreover, the family in the seventeenth century was becoming more of a refuge, a haven against 'outsiders' and, therefore, as an institution it was in the process of separating itself from the public realm. All this can be seen from the study of visual culture: subtle similarities, distinctions, in short, sociability.[70]

The secondary writings are divided in their support or refutation of the notion that women were passive and without agency, although they are based on many of the same empirical materials. This brings to mind another sort of narrowness in source selection whereby typically a very small number of women have been selected and the same material has been used as representative of each woman's life. Remarkably, whenever a problem arises in the argument, some scholars will make a brief comment to the effect that even though discrepancies exist between the empirical materials and the point that the scholar is trying to make, these small 'gaps' can be virtually ignored because they are aberrations of the 'truth'. This type of dismissal only serves to show the misconceptions that exist because it is wrong to privilege certain materials and to exclude ones that do not meet the expectations of contemporary agendas. Bathsua Makin, a tutor to the daughter of Charles I and a great advocate for the necessity of education for females, wrote that "we cannot be so stupid as to imagine, that God gives ladies great estates, merely that they may eat, drink, sleep and rise up to play."[71] This is just one of many examples of writing that clearly refutes any idea of passive agency.[72]

Some scholars have sought to address the problem of using a narrow range of source materials. The feminist scholar, Margaret Ezell, has challenged the typical feminist construction whereby women are viewed as being silenced and therefore victimized by a misogynist culture. Ezell looks at some ways in which women of various classes mistrusted the printed text and sought to retain control over the medium by participating in manuscript exchanges with both men and women. In this way print and manuscript cultures were "interpenetrated" and this meant that "such volumes complicated the modern tendency to draw a clear distinctions between

[70]Chartier succinctly states, "the entire history of private life comes down to a change in the forms of sociability: from the anonymous social life of the street, castle court, square, or village to a more restricted sociability centered on the family or even the individual." p. 9

[71]B. Makin, *An Essay to Revive the Ancient Education of Gentlewomen* (1673).

[72]Women were active in all manner of activities and decisions that had to be made when it came to family, household management or estate business. Other examples of active women who exercised control over their daily lives can be found in the well-known writings of Lady Anne Clifford, Alice Thornton and Lady Margaret Hoby and these will be discussed in greater detail in successive Chapters.

public and private realms, and the modern feminist tendency to correlate the former with men, the latter with women."[73] In real practice, manuscripts "creat[ed] an interesting border territory on various ideological maps" and is one area of activity where the private and public realms are less distinct.[74]

What the problem of privileging source materials really highlights is the incoherence or 'gap' between how things appear to be and how they really functioned. As previously mentioned, this is especially true in the realm of gender issues and the patriarchal system and it is those scholars, in particular, that acknowledge this conundrum. Anthony Fletcher states explicitly that there was "no way the household could be made consistent with a simple model of gender hierarchy."[75] In reality, it was more about age and class than any gender difference. Fletcher says that the best hope we have of dealing with the gap between prescription and practice is to study the writings of the women themselves, which he says are "personal and reflective."[76] Again, he must be referring to only a sampling of 'writing' because women wrote scientific texts, household account books and legal documents. If we look at the correspondence between men and women of the time, we can see all manner of topics discussed, some of which are personal, definitely, but a great number deal with professional matters, too.[77] Even diaries, thought to be reflective, private and devotional in nature, had other functions that tell us something about women's business abilities.[78]

It seems as if Fletcher presumes that women are 'oppressed' because of their gender; "upper-class women were coopted into the gender system" and not in control of their own lives.[79] He gives them very little room for agency and active self-identity formation. This problem shows up again when Fletcher delivers the completely wrong impression that in women's writings we

[73]M. J. M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*, p. 68; also see M. W. Ferguson, "Renaissance concepts of the 'woman writer'," in H. Wilcox (ed.), *Women and Literature in Britain, 1500-1700* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 161.
[74]See H. Love, *Scribal Production in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1993).
[75]A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination*, p. 403.
[76]*Ibid.*, p. 409.
[77]A. Searle (ed.), *Barrington Family Letters 1628-1632*, Camden Fourth Series, 28 (London: 1983); M. H. Nicolson, *Conway Letters: the correspondence of Anne, Viscountess Conway, Henry More and their Friends, 1642-1684* (London, 1930); D. Gardiner (ed.),*The Oxinden Letters 1607-1642* (London, 1933); R. A. Anselment (ed.), *The Remembrances of Elizabeth Freake 1671-1714*, Camden Fifth Series, 18 (Cambridge, 2001); M. J. M. Ezell (ed.), *The Poems and Prose of Mary, Lady Chudleigh* (Oxford, 1993).
[78]E. Botonaki, "Seventeenth-Century Englishwomen's Spiritual Diaries: Self-Examination, Covenanting, and Account-Keeping," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 30 (1999), pp. 3-21 states that women used a language of commerce and exchange in their diaries and the portrayed their relationship with God as one of two parties in an exchange. The author further states that the women were actually involved in day-to-day management and it was more than just 'pretending' when written in a diary (pp. 16, 22).
[79]A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination.*

find many examples of how they could turn constraints into permissions, into little pockets of liberty or authority.[80] In his book, we find too the other common problem, the asymmetry in how similarities and differences are measured between women and men. Codes of honour and civility provided the conceptions of manly behaviour and self-expression yet did they not do this for women? In another gender-related contradiction, Fletcher states that "the typical English gentleman certainly expected his wife to be autonomous and show considerable initiative in day-to-day household management;" he then conceded that how particular partnerships worked "depended, of course, upon personality and relationships."[81]

The historiographical problems associated with asymmetry, internal contradiction, incoherence and, finally, the source materials themselves have now been identified and explained with respect to the object of study, 'Household'. These shortcomings are interconnected and far-reaching throughout a series of disciplines and will be dealt with in this thesis. The ensuing analysis will draw on a number of related themes of seventeenth-century history and will bring them together under one workable heading. The themes include: the nature of cultural authority, social order and stability, identity and gender construction, private and public spheres, codes of conduct and behaviour, patriarchy (ideal and real) and network functions (family, friends and kin). Looking at household as an institution can go some way to addressing important questions about power and authority that will go beyond the usual approach of seeing "gender [as] a primary way of signifying relationships of power."[82] 'Household' as an institution might be thought of in a similar way to how 'the court' has been defined as an institutional structure and a place for individuals to interact within it.[83] Specifically in this analysis, I want to look at the institution itself, and to explore how *both* men and women understood and displayed agency within this structure. Moreover, an approach such as this can help to steer us away from the narrow Whig interpretation of history and its accompanying teleological approach to the past.

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[80]E. Hoby, *Virtue of Necessity: English Women's Writings 1649-1688* (London, 1988), p. 8; quoted by A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination* (p. 411).

[81]A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination*, pp. 178, 180.

[82]J. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York, 1988), p. 5.

[83]For general analyses see, G. Elton, "Points of Contact," *TRHS.*, vols. 24-26 (London: 1974-1976); N. Elias, *The Court Society* (Oxford, 1983); E. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York, 1959).

Chapter Two *How to Understand the Concept of Household*

"History has meaning because human action produces meaning"[1]

Many different disciplines have attempted to study family units and the social interaction that goes on within them, so, by bringing a number of theoretical models together, it is plausible that a more thorough understanding can be achieved. A multi-theory approach can integrate a wider variety of topics that relate to household and, furthermore, will challenge some long held assumptions. Theories in and of themselves are not methodologically specific, therefore, they can be bundled and assembled together exactly for the purpose of explaining how something functions, in this case, how the 'Household' institution works. Such a study is amenable to a weaving together of social, anthropological, psychological, historical and cultural theories, which will provide interpretive tools to look at the topic with fresh insight. Thinking of household as an object of study will require a paradigm shift, something that is always a challenge, because of the need to re-conceptualise longstanding notions. It will require a re-assessment of the primary documentation in addition to any other source material used in other disciplinary studies. The methodology in this thesis will go beyond what has been done hitherto in terms of asking 'what was women's role in historical development' and, instead, will suggest a way of studying the *institution* of household.[2]

Taking such a broad concept as 'Household' offers the opportunity and, in fact, the necessity of incorporating other disciplines into the analysis. This is not a new idea: as Kevin Sharpe had commented some years ago, even though historians and literary scholars seldom meet on the same ground, in early seventeenth-century England this is less the case.[3] In other instances, there have been attempts to bring culture and politics together and the result is a blending of private and public lives into one.[4] Visual culture is another way of broadening the perspective of seventeenth-century lives.[5]

In an example of recent scholarship that attempts to blend social history with visual culture, Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes discuss household management and general duties of the running of estates by a woman. They examined the tomb Lady Bacon designed as an example of how her carefully planned monument represented the construction of her social

[1] H. White, *The Content of the Form: narrative discourse and historical representation* (Baltimore, 1987), p. 179.
[2] See for instance the Introduction in M. Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1993) for a discussion of the development of this question and her teleological response to it.
[3] K. Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment: the politics of literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 1.
[4] S. Zwicker, *Lines of Authority; politics and English literary culture 1649-1689* (Ithaca, New York, 1993).
[5] Historical interpretation of British portrait painting, as distinct from the more pedestrian but essential preliminary cataloguing of works of art, has hardly begun, K. Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment*, p. iii.

identity in a long and complex life. Such visual depiction can represent an individual personality and at the same time a familial identity. Lady Bacon sacrificed for the survival of her lineage and in so doing became the rock on which the home was founded; this says something important about her role in the household.[6] That portraiture is linked to self-imaging, is a long-standing assumption. In addition to her tomb, Lady Bacon's written documents explain that "despite the uniform language of obedience and submission assumed by the dominant, male discourse on female behaviour, elite women in early seventeenth-century England frequently found themselves negotiating between more complex roles."[7]

Literary scholarship has made attempts to reveal more about how women functioned in everyday lives of estate and household management. Barbara K. Lewalski focussed on English estate poems where the lady (the wife or daughter of the house) played a prominent role.[8] She looked at four estate poems (those that describe the role and responsibility of the woman as well as the aesthetic setting of the landscape and buildings) that describe a woman of special importance to her husband or in her own right. In all these poems are found similarities including: a physical description of the house, the land or the estate; a contrast between the good order of the house and life on the estate with what is 'outside'; praise of the landholders's virtues and values as manifested in the estate; a concern with family history and continuity; an examination of the relationship between human and nature; and a description of familial and social roles — covering lord, lady, children, host, guests, servants, tenants. All these things are mentioned in men's and women's writing of the times, including letters, autobiographies, meditations, and diaries. This list covers all the aspects of everyday life and, hence, all the aspects of what constitutes 'Household' in this period.

'Household' is the pivotal stage on which all behaviour codes converged and were performed in early modern England. The family, which "formed the basis of the entire social order" was an essential component in the household.[9] More importantly, it was "only as a member of a family that one acquired any meaning or status in society for it was through a family

[6] F. Heal and C. Holmes, "*Prudentia ultra sexum*' Lady Jane Bacon and the Management of her Families," M. C. McClendon, J. P. Ward and M. MacDonald (eds.), *Protestant Identities: Religion, Society, and Self-Fashioning in Post-Reformation England,* (Stanford, 1999), p. 104.

[7] *Ibid.* Another example of women and their visual depiction would be Lady Anne Clifford who was well known for the number of portraits of herself that she had made and how she commonly gave them away for gifts.

[8] B. K. Lewalski, "The Lady of the Country-House Poem," G. Jackson-Stops (*et al*), *The Fashioning and Functioning of the British Country House* (Washington, 1989).

[9] G. Schochet, *The Authoritarian Family and Political Attitudes in 17th century England: patriarchalism in political thought* (London, 1988), p. 45.

that an individual came in contact with the outside world."[10] Families have always been situated within the setting of the household so it is reasonable to see the significant role that the household played in the broader picture of the whole of society. Thus, it is critical that (although we should still be considering the family as an integral unit within society), we must see its significance as limited if we do not situate it within the institutional context. Because "the family was a social, public institution, not a private one that could be left to its own devices," it means, for our purposes, that the family should be connected to the larger picture, the next magnitude of analysis, the institution: the 'Household."[11] In addition, studying "Household' informs us about authority in local community and brings clarity and depth of understanding to English society in the seventeenth century — a society that was based on property, that is, the land and the estate, both controlled by the family which is the social unit founded within the 'Household'.[12]

Another way to a more balanced approach to historical studies was offered by Peter Burke who saw value in assembling a 'braided narrative'. He reminded his readers that historians and sociologists have not always been the best of neighbours but that it is essential for them to try to be so because of the advantages it can bring. Any sociologist will concur with Burke's remark that "change is structured and structures change."[13] One of the positive contributions that feminist theory brings to the issues herein, according to Burke, is that it calls into question accepted schemes of periodization, many of which are artificially imposed with respect to trying to trace 'change'. Institutions and their change over time is one of the ongoing problems that stems from intellectual conflicts about the function and structure of the institution versus human agency and actors. Looking at structure is necessary because it describes and discusses institutions but human actors must be taken into consideration as well because of how their activity (or passivity) affects the 'institutionalized structure'. One of the critiques has been that history, in its quest for long term trends and transformations, has tended to leave the people out and in so doing become 'unhistorical'.[14] That is why any study of 'Household' will take into account the fairly static nature of the institution along with the dynamism of the humans who inhabit them. Burke further sees a need for the incorporation of the role of psychology in historical study.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 65.
[11] L. Pollock, "Living on the stage of the World, p. 79.
[12] For example see E. Trotter, *Seventeenth Century Life in the Country Parish* (Cambridge, 1919), a book that is still often cited in studies of seventeenth century England.
[13] P. Burke, *History and Social Theory*, p. 2.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 113.

Psychology potentially can reveal the roots of behaviour even though it cannot exactly get inside someone's head. Geertz would agree with this, too because we can never truly see things from the 'natives's point of view'.[15]

Taking 'Household' as the topic of study, naturally, means that we have to look at the culture of the time in order to get a better understanding of the people and their institutions. Pierre Bourdieu's term, *habitus,* the impetus that helps to describe what is active or passive in a culture, is a useful one to incorporate when we are thinking about agency. The term itself is derived from Aristotle and has been used to help counter the staid mechanical 'rules' of society that Levi-Strauss classified as such. Thus, *habitus* is one way to incorporate an individual scheme that can generate responses to endless changing situations.[16] In short, it helps to explain just how an individual may respond to the rigidity of the structure and the bigger question of how culture or community is constructed. It allows for a way to see the relation between culture and society as active and passive, determining and determined.[17] Clearly, Burke advocates using historical methodology as complementary to those of other disciplines. By so doing, perhaps we can avoid 'a dialogue of the deaf' and try to avoid the pitfall of attending to concrete detail at the expense of general patterns, as Ferdinand Braudel has cautioned.[18]

There have been many approaches generated in recent years in the realm of cultural history. Lynn Hunt stated that we are not to find a new cultural history by identifying a new practice to describe but by incorporating other disciplinary approaches and their debates.[19] For instance, in both art history and literary criticism the recognition of 'representation' has been identified as a central contentious problem. "What does a picture or novel do, and how does it do it?"[20] What is the relation between the picture, the novel or the letter, and the work it purports to represent? The 'new cultural history' asks the same kinds of questions now but first it had to re-establish the objects of historical study as being like those of literature and art. Like Hunt, Randolph Starn put forward new questions about the techniques of cultural history, specifically the difference between 'reading' and 'seeing'. He was concerned with what is the

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[15]C. Geertz, "From the Native's Point of View," *Local Knowledge: further essays in interpretive anthropology* (New York, 1983).
[16]P. Burke, *History and Social Theory,* p. 120.
[17]*Ibid.*, p. 123.
[18]F. Braudel, *A History of Civilizations* (New York, 1993) explains this concern in Chapter Two, "The Study of Civilization Involves All the Social Sciences."
[19]L. Hunt (ed.), *The New Cultural History* (Los Angeles, 1989), p. 9.
[20]*Ibid.*, p. 17.

glance and what is the measured view, in short, it was about perception.[21] He demonstrated the relevance of art-historical documentation for cultural history and recast the terms of the art historical debate about representation. Moreover, he historicized the process of seeing by showing that even forms have historical content. The mechanics and significance of this can be incorporated into the study of 'Household'. Clearly, "historians working in the cultural mode should not be discouraged by theoretical diversity, for we are just entering a remarkable new phase when the other human sciences (including especially literary studies but also anthropology and sociology) are discovering us anew."[22]

Gender issues are an integral part of any study of social and cultural life. Natalie Zemon Davis relied on the distinctions between men and women to illuminate the workings of early modern culture.[23] Joan Wallach Scott linked gender history with the analysis of discourse. She stated that the rising influence of literary techniques of reading and literary theories can be clearly seen in gender studies.[24] Gender, it should be noted, is taken in this context to mean knowledge about sexual difference and this difference is the basis of the social order. Scott found it imperative to pursue cross-disciplinary theoretical questions in order to undertake a feminist historical approach. These questions are needed in order to know how gender hierarchies are constructed, legitimated, challenged and maintained and therefore made the foundation of social order.[25] As do other feminist theoreticians, Scott assumed gender inequality but stops short of exactly saying how the 'inequality' is measured. Yet, she notes that historians accept this asymmetry and assume that gender difference explains the asymmetries of male and female 'experience'.[26] A better approach would be a post-structuralist one, according to Scott which can offer feminism a powerful analytic perspective. How hierarchies are constructed and legitimized usefully emphasizes a study of processes (not origin), considers multiple rather than single causes (even though it remains causally based) and it is based on discourse or rhetoric study, not on

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[21] R. Starn, "Seeing Culture in a Room for a Renaissance Prince," in L. Hunt (ed.), *The New Cultural History*, p. 205 -232; see also, M. Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: on the historical explanation of pictures* (New Haven, 1988). I am indebted to Dr. J. Sybesma for the latter reference and for other scholarly advice on art historical and visual cultural matters.

[22] L. Hunt (ed.), *The New Cultural History*, p. 22.

[23] N. Z. Davis, " 'Women's History' in Transition: The European Case," *Feminist Studies* 3 (1976) explains that "we should be interested in the history of both men and women, that we should not be working only on the subjected sex any more than a historian of class can focus exclusively on peasants" (p. 90).

[24] J. Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, p. 19; see N. Zemon Davis, "Anthropology and History in the 1980s: the possibility of the past," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 12 (1981).

[25] J. Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, p. 3.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

ideology or consciousness. "It does not abandon attention to structures and institutions, but it does insist that we need to understand what these organizations mean in order to understand how they work...we must eschew the compartmentalizing tendency of so much of social history that relegates sex and gender to the institution of the family, one that associates class with the workplace and the community, and locates war and constitutional issues exclusively in the domain of the 'high politics' of governments and states."[27]

Scott claims that the discipline of history through its practices produces knowledge about the past generally, and inevitably, about sexual difference as well. History thus operates as a particular kind of cultural institution endorsing and announcing constructions of gender and, therefore, we really need a feminist approach to gender, politics, and history. She advocates the historicization of gender but says she will not be able to use one category to finally explain all inequality, all oppression or all history. She assumes these are problems from the outset, in a similar way that Marxists theoreticians would relegate the origins of problems to 'class struggle'. I disagree that "gender offers both a good way of thinking about history, about the ways in which hierarchies of difference have been constituted, and of theorizing (feminist) politics."[28] Simply, the explanation is mono-causal as with the Marxist debates.

Further feminist theory and approaches can be seen in, Joan Kelly, *Women, History & Theory,* where she explores the way in which feminists are concerned with the family as a source of women's oppression.[29] Interestingly, she contradicts herself in her description of 'pre-industrial' family (in the 15th and 16th centuries) saying that it was patriarchal and the father usually passed his wealth to his sons and that the power was vested in the father. However, "although feudal society recognized paternal authority, an aristocratic wife's kin protected her interests, and everyone treated children more as member of the family line than as property of their fathers."[30] According to Kelly's agenda-driven history (reminiscent of Engel's theory), "the father controls the marriages and sexual lives, as well as the work lives, of all members of the household in ways that best support its economy."[31] For young urban girls, their marriages were arranged either by their own father or by the master and that marriage seemed preferable because it put a woman in charge of the domestic arrangements of her husband's household.

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[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 6.
[28] *Ibid.*,p. 10; this would be assuming again an inclusivist or exclusivist history where men and women are concerned.
[29] J. Kelly, *Women, History & Theory: the essays of Joan Kelly* (Chicago, 1984), chapter 5.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 120.
[31] *Ibid.*

Although she might be called the mistress of the household, it was 'his' household and wives were expected to give obedient service. Such statements, presented as broad truths, are prevalent in the scholarship yet they crumble with a scrutiny of the empirical evidence.

Some authors have given more equity (if not equality) to gender issues in seventeenth-century society. In one case the author implied that it was more about individual personality than sexual difference: "for all this [the curse of womanhood and motherhood,] women in the seventeenth century were as they had always been, strong vessels where they had the opportunity; that is to say, where a particular combination of character and circumstances enabled them to be so. In this course they were exactly like their male counterparts, no more no less."[32] But again, we can see a contradiction of sorts in a later comment that "women, given the structure of society of the time, had vastly fewer public opportunities to demonstrate their worth and resourcefulness."[33] This suggests that womens' work is less valued than that of the men, most probably because it was kept indoors. It is not uncommon for secondary literature on the Civil War to show women at their most "peculiar character" or to describe the behaviour and agency of women at that time as unusual or idiosyncratic. "It is, however, an almost universal fact of history that women have done well in wartime when they have been able or compelled to act as substitutes for men, showing themselves resourceful, courageous and strong in every sense of the words; in short for displaying without much difficulty all those qualities generally described as masculine."[34] As Keith Thomas wrote concerning women in the time of the Civil War and Interregnum years, he said they were acquiring an identity and perhaps even a significance of their own, but this may no longer be a valid statement for that period. [35] When the study of 'Household' is explored carefully the empirical material suggests strongly women behaved liked this throughout the course of the century according to various circumstances and in various ways.

Moving away from feminist theories and their shortcomings, one can positively assert that other theories can be applied to the topic at hand. Clifford Geertz's term, 'thick description', can be aptly applied to a study of household. This term does not mean materially thick but allows us to distinguish between the subtlety of a deliberate wink or a twitch. Geertz's approach examines public behaviour for what it says rather than what it does and it rejects causal explanation in favour of understanding (*Verstehen*). 'Thick description' leads to brilliant readings

[32] A. Fraser, *The Weaker Vessel: Woman's Lot in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1984), p. 468.
[33] *Ibid.*
[34] *Ibid.*
[35] K. Thomas, "Women and the Civil War Sects," *Past & Present* 13 (1958), p. 42-62.

of individual situations, rituals, and institutions, however, "it does not require saying how 'cultural texts' relate to each other or to general processes of economic and social change."[36] Furthermore, according to Geertz, "politics is dissolved into culture and power is envehicled as public drama."[37] He also states that culture is also politics and a set of "control mechanisms...for the governing of behaviour."[38] This cultural approach is available to this study and will be able to contribute to our understanding of display, ritual and ceremony in the household. Kevin Sharpe says we need a full reading of ritual and display.[39] Geertz argues that power exists in display and representation as much as in the institutions and mechanics of society. Therefore, this study of 'Household' will take into account ideology, representation and visual evidence to get a better understanding of the dynamism of the institution.

Norbert Elias preferred synthesis over analysis (meaning that he focussed on interdependencies of 'human beings in the round'). He "showed how seemingly autonomous activities are inter-related — religion, philosophy, art, etiquette, politics, economics, warfare etc."[40] His example of cross-disciplinary work helps to counter the tendency to focus on one approach or a single theme. Elias's main perspective involved the concept of interdependence, that is, the concern with the many ways in which people are bonded to each other and how those relationships work. In short, his sociological perspective is based on social-interrelatedness, an important one for this historical study.[41] For instance, Elias studied men and women in Ancient Rome and related it to the changing balance of power between the two. He concluded that history cannot be understood as monolithic invariant of male domination.[42] He looked at the process in forming the Roman state which led to a greater equality between husbands and wives. It took place first in the Roman upper class, and later had major consequences on European social development — something that is not generally recognized. Although I am not tracing long term processes as Elias was intent on doing, his methods can be similarly employed in my research on households.

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[36]Ronald G. Walters, "Signs of the Times: Clifford Geertz and Historians," *Social Research*, 47 (1980), pp. 551-52.
[37]F. Inglis, *Clifford Geertz: culture, custom and ethics* (Cambridge, Mass., 2000), p. 159.
[38]C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: selected essays* (New York, 1973), p. 49.
[39]K. Sharpe, *Remapping Early Modern England: The Culture of Seventeenth-Century Politics* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 17.
[40]M. Featherstone, "Norbert Elias and Figurational Sociology: Some Prefatory Remarks," *Theory, Culture & Society* 4 (1987), p. 202.
[41]For a more thorough explanation of Elias's approach see, A. Bogner, "The Structure of Social Processes: a commentary," *Sociology* 20 (1986), pp. 387-411.
[42]N. Elias, "The Changing Balance of Power between the Sexes-A Process-Sociological Study: The Example of the Ancient Roman State," *Theory, Culture & Society* 4 (1987), pp. 287-316. See N. Elias' major works, *The Court Society* (Oxford, 1983) and *The Civilizing Process* (New York, 1982).

Another sociologist, Erving Goffman, utilized a social-anthropological approach in his analysis of everyday life. He talked about life as theatre and more specifically, everyday life as a dramaturgical, theatrical-like performance. "I shall consider the way in which the individual in ordinary work situations presents himself and his activity to others, the ways in which he guides and controls the impression they form of him, and the kinds of things he may and may not do while sustaining his performance before them."[43] This analysis can be applied to the study of household, too, because everyday life and the behaviour of the individuals who operate within it is about the 'art of impression management'. This type of control of behaviour in everyday situations implies nothing is left to chance or happenstance and all action is deliberate. Moreover, the actual techniques are practised by all individuals regardless of class or gender. If we think of those early modern etiquette manuals that provide warnings against indiscretions, behavioural controls are really rules about how to calculate and plan all responses. The performer is taught to be highly disciplined, to use discretion and imbue self-control.

'Household' as an institution exemplifies "a social establishment [that is] a place surrounded by fixed barriers to perception in which a particular kind of activity regularly takes place."[44] Any social establishment may be studied profitably from the point of view of impression management. Moreover, this establishment (or for purposes of our terminology, 'Household') can be viewed technically, politically, structurally, and culturally. All the facts that can be discovered about an establishment are relevant to each of the four perspectives but that each perspective gives its own priority and order to these facts.[45] A further category was added by Goffman that particularly applies to studying household as an institution. It involves the dramaturgical and concerns itself with the identity and interrelationships of the several individuals that operate in the establishment. All of these take into account three critical areas of inquiry: the individual personality, social interaction, and the society.

In the following Chapters, the roles and responsibilities of women in the seventeenth-century will be considered for what they can tell us about individual identity and agency within the institution of 'Household', in the broadest sense of the word. England will be the main geographical area of study although some examples from Ireland and Scotland will be incorporated from time to time, a comparison with Europe is beyond the limits of this thesis.

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[43] E. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), p. xi.
[44] *Ibid.*, p. 238.
[45] *Ibid.*, p. 240.

Intensely political, the typical Whig history has kept to rigid time periods, chronologies, men and to elite history.[46] This approach to 'Household' will provide the chance to see the other half of the population and to see a history of women's activity not passivity. It will also address the ongoing criticism about doing 'elitist history' because it will incorporate all levels of society: one can understand the dynamics of interaction between many who were apparently ranks apart.[47] In some ways, we can look at "history [as] holding the door ajar" insofar as there is a part of the story not yet told about the many roles that women undertook in their lifetime.[48] Time and time again, the written correspondence shows the affectionate concern of a husband for the wife's place and authority in the household.[49]

There are more conceptual implications to be explored in light of the suggestions that have just been made with respect to household as a generative institution. This study will be about the typical not the idiosyncratic. It will look at a variety of individuals over the entire seventeenth-century. This will help to show that the Civil War, Interregnum and Restoration periods are not mere 'breaks' in the history of English society but that they indicate the 'normalcy' of society and of the institutions which they created and sustained. The middle decades of the seventeenth century were not a time where the 'world was turned upside down'. The representation of the culture will be addressed as an integral part of understanding household, "for the people of the baroque [painting] became an especially apt medium for rendering an account of the experiences of human reality, of the living."[50] This multi-faceted approach can address Sharpe's statement about needing to incorporate literary, artistic and architectural documents. These are not 'fiction' any more than state papers are 'facts' . The study of art during the seventeenth century "has suffered because of 'isolation' from the general currents of political, religious and cultural and social history" and the image should be relocated

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[46]In a statement that is confirmed repeatedly, D. Loades, *Politics and the Nation*, claims "British historians remain remarkably wedded to conventional chronological divisions" thus making the historiography of Stuart Britain distinctly different from that of Tudor England (p. 402). Moreover, as historiographical breaks, both 1603 and 1660 are not satisfactory in explaining anything other than the surface political events, therefore inviting the need to reconfigure the historiography in a more comprehensive format (p. 407).

[47]Take for instance the well-known Samuel Pepys, who knew and wrote about everyone who visited him in his house from the Earl of Sandwich to an itinerant musician who scraped a living with his fiddle; see M. Abbott, *Family Ties: English Families 1540-1920* (London, 1993), p. 11.

[48]A. Fraser, *Weaker Vessels*, p. 5.

[49]See the example of Robert Sidney writing to his wife, Barbara Gamage regarding a proposal to hire a certain estate steward, in B. Lewalski, "Country House Poem", p. 263.

[50]J. A. Maravall, "Culture of the Baroque: Analysis of a Historical Structure," *Theory and History of Literature* (Minnesota, 1986), p. 259.

and read in its broader 'ideological history'.[51]

It is imperative that "to get at the inwardness of the every-day life of a past generation we need to know as much about the women as about the men."[52] This statement was written in 1955 and although we have come a long way in our study of men and women in the early modern period, it is obvious that imbalances still need to be readdressed. Diaries, autobiographies and letters are fundamental but so are many other local records such as: household inventories, churchwarden accounts, orders of quarter sessions, and minutes of boroughs as well as literary sources. Difficulties in finding material should not be an excuse to avoid a comprehensive study: the evidence is there.[53] It is often the case that "revisions result from changes of angle and perspective" of the same evidentiary materials or from the conjunction of different material, let alone from the discovery of entirely new ones.[54]

'Household' then, should be understood as a theatre of performance and social interaction, a real-life glimpse of the everyday where the interconnectedness between individuals attitudes and behaviours can be observed and analysed. 'Household', according to my definition, is a place where 'private' and 'public' are united — regardless of gender divisions. "In pursuit of their domestic tasks, women were forced to go abroad" and because the household was always open to public scrutiny, "men at home were not in a private world."[55] Lady Russell writes, "I hope my duty will always prevail over the strongest inclination I have [to be delivered of the full responsibility of managing the household since her husband had been executed] I believe to assist my yet helpless children is my business, which makes me take many dinners abroad, and do of that nature many things, the *performance* of which is hard enough to a heavy and weary mind, but yet I bless God for it." [56]

Based on empirical material we can see women as key constituents in the management of the family 'business'. Understanding 'Household' means attending to the physicality of the 'infrastructures' themselves, such as the land and the homes, as well as the roles of the

[51]K. Sharpe, *Remapping*, p. 26; see also C. Geertz, "Art as a Cultural System," in *Local Knowledge* (1981).
[52]W. Notestein, "The English Woman, 1580-1650," in J. Plumb (ed.), *Studies in Social History: a tribute to G. M Trevelyan* (London, 1955), p. 71.
[53]According to D. M. Loades, *Politics and the Nation*, this is especially true when it comes to evidence about the social and economic role of women, p. 395.
[54]*Ibid.*, p. 394.
[55]P. Crawford, "Public Duty, Conscience, and Women," in J. Morrill, P. Slack and D. Woolf (eds.), *Public Duty and Private Conscience in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1993), p. 60; D. Cressy, "Response: Private Lives, Public Performance, and Rites of Passage," B. S. Travitsky and A. F. Seeff (eds.), *Attending to Women in Early Modern England* (Newark, 1994), p. 187 for his proposition that all life was public in early modern England.
[56]Lady Russell, *Some Account of the Life of Rachael Wriothesley Lady Russell* (London, 1820), pp. 82-83.

individuals and how they related to each other and the business of management. Family and friend relationships involved real social interaction in which women were as active as men. These social relationships were also tied together economically and politically which made them even more integrated.[57] Not only were the individuals in relationship to each other but they were also closely tied to their houses (as letters, account books, and legal records show). Further examples of the connection between individuals and their physicality of home can be seen in paintings as well as in many examples of poetry.[58] The sources for examining the experiences of women are fragmentary but not insufficient. From these and their application to the study of Household, we can learn something about how women deployed their time, talents, and wealth in consolidating family fortunes, in arranging marriages and in spending money.[59]

Because I am not proposing a 'household economics' approach to understanding Household, I will not include numerical comparisons of servants nor of other household members. I want instead to examine Household as part of a wider social and cultural framework and to go beyond both the well-worn 'members and organizational structure' approach and the familiar categories of debate on the political economy of early modern England.[60] The dynamic interaction that occurs in Households requires that we conceptualize the Household not as a static social fact but as a constantly renegotiated social unit.[61] Identity formation, therefore, is symbiotic with the developmental pattern of families and individuals and is linked necessarily with the Household and the community.[62]

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[57] Discussed in C. Holmes, "The County Community in Stuart Historiography," *Journal of British Studies*, 19 (1980), p.57. A. Everitt, *Change in the Provinces: the seventeenth century* (Leicester, 1969), p. 10 states that it was common for gentry to marry amongst neighbours, thereby keeping close local ties firmly entrenched (although there is some dispute as to whether this applies to the counties that Everitt looked at closely or whether it applies to England overall; see C. Holmes, *op. cit.*).

[58] An often quoted example of this is Sir Philip Sidney's poem about his home, Penhurst, in his *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, (ed.) A. Feuillerat (London, 1922).

[59] *Ibid.*, p. 34.

[60] A. Everitt, *Change in the Provinces*, p. 10; see chapter 4, "Family and household Life, "in R. B. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850: the emergence of separate spheres?* (London, 1998) for a good explanation of integration of social, economic and political significance of the Household; also P. Laslett, *The World We Have Lost* and E. A. Wrigley and R. S. Schofield, *The Population History of England, 1541-1871: a reconstruction* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981).

[61] "Changes in the social distributions of land, wealth, status and power retain their place among the most persistent preoccupations of historical debate," K. Wrightson, "The Social Order of Early Modern England: Three Approaches," in L. Bonfield, R. M. Smith and K. Wrightson (eds.), *The World We Have Gained* (Oxford, 1986) p. 177.

[62] A. Everitt, *Change in the Provinces*, p. 9; see H. Kamen, *Early Modern European Society* (New York, 2000), pp. 14-22 for a general comparison to European societies. N. Cooper, *Houses of the Gentry 1480-1680* (New Haven, London, 1999) explains that personal identity came to be provided by objects and physical surroundings and was, therefore, reflected in the house (as a structural model) and its inhabitants (p. 11).

Categorization of the object of study as well as the topics and subject matter is crucial to any analysis (as Chapter One stressed). A historian "brings his categories with him and sees the data through them. In everything that is supposed to be scientific, Reason must be awake and reflection applied."[63] If historians are inattentive, distinctive and missed opportunities proliferate.[64] This is not to suggest that, with disciplined attention, the 'facts' can be induced to 'speak for themselves' or any such epistemological naivete. Hayden White is right to claim that "no given set or sequence of real events is intrinsically tragic, comic, farcical, and so on, but can be constructed as such only by the imposition of the structure of a given story type on the events; it is the choice of the story type and its imposition upon the events that endow them with meaning."[65] My structure begins, literally, with the structure of the 'Household', namely, the house. In both a physical and an institutional sense, the 'Household' functions as the structure yet it is not a mere narrative 'construction' imposed upon human experience. "It is undeniable that historians must select, piece together, interpret, arrange and so on, but to say that this constitutes an *imposition* on the past is to imply a violence that 'misses the properly dialectical character' of historical inquiry."[66]

What then should form the basis for the methodology when analysing the Household? Keith Thomas thinks social anthropology can help historians to recognize the strangeness of analytical trends of very recent times. Social anthropology may offer organizing principles that connect and explain what would otherwise seem like random facts. In addition, a social anthropological approach "could greatly enlarge the historian's agenda" because of the way it could highlight family and community relationships.[67] This approach, also known as 'cultural anthropology', is fundamental to understanding institutions and individuals.[68] Moreover, it not about rigid formulae but it can provide "an indispensable stimulus to the historian."[69] A multi-disciplinary process is capable of stirring the imagination and of suggesting new ways of looking

[63]G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, trans., J. Sibree (New York, 1956), p. 11. Finding agreement on a single approach or categorical system is difficult; "consensus among historians is almost as rare as it is among politicians," D. Loades, *Politics and the Nation*, p. 408; Loades encourages the student to be sceptical of historians and their debates.

[64]M. Hughes-Warrington, *Fifty Key Thinkers on History* (New York, 2000), p. 136.

[65]H. White, *Content of the Form*, p. 44.

[66]A. P. Norman "Historical Narratives on Their Own Terms," in B. Fay, P. Pomper and R. T. Vann (eds.), *History And Theory: Contemporary Readings* (Blackwell, 1998), p. 165; P. Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, (Chicago, 1984), pp. 70-73 also discusses this.

[67]*Ibid.*

[68]For instance, see C. Geertz, *Interpretation of Culture* and *Local Knowledge*.

[69]P. Burke, B. Harrison and P. Slack (eds.), *Civil Histories*, p. 14.

at a subject- exactly what is needed and appropriate for this study of Household.[70] Historians should "consult anthropological writings not for prescriptions, but for suggestions; not for universal rules of human behaviour, but for relevant comparisons" and they "should also be prepared to offer advice about their own work and about anthropological theory."[71] When the object of study is as complex as 'Household', this advice appears to be fittingly necessary.

[70] "Interview with Keith Thomas" (Interviewed by Dr. Francis Brooks), 29 July 1983, in the *Australian Historical Association's Bulletin*, 36 (1983), p. 26. Sir Keith further explained that "in practice, we historians are bound to be parasitic upon other disciplines, not just anthropology, sociology or psychology, but literary criticism and philosophy. We necessarily depend for our ideas upon others. If the historian doesn't try to keep up with that is going on in other intellectual spheres his working set of assumptions is bound to get out of date" (p. 26).

[71] N. Zemon Davis, "Anthropology and History in the 1980," p. 267. Keith Thomas agreed with this; see his introduction to J. Bremmer and H. Roodenburg, *A Cultural History of Gesture* (New York, 1991), pp. 1-14, especially pp. 3-5 wherein he discusses the connections between anthropological, linguistic and social psychological approaches.

Chapter Three — *Integration of the Components of Household*

> *Women have participated in virtually all aspects of the life of a great house, and their presence has been rendered less visible only by the shorthand of history, which has persisted in subordinating women to men.*[1]

What then is the role of the house (or, better yet, the 'estate') as it relates to the individual and society? For gentle society, it was about "display and an intention to impress which lay behind their [the house] conception, but even more important was the strong desire to honour the sovereign who might pay a visit."[2] In 1634, the future Duke of Newcastle, then William Cavendish, added the terrace range in anticipation of entertaining the King and Queen at Bolsover Castle in Derbyshire. They were suitably impressed and rewarded him with the guardianship of the Prince of Wales. Not only were houses used for symbolic purposes (to represent a certain level of success) but they also functioned in a practical way, as home to the family. Interesting lineages for both can be traced throughout England. Thus, "alliance by marriage was one of the great bonds of society, and membership of the House of Commons another; it is exceptional to come across a house that was not built by a peer or a Member of Parliament."[3] It is important to remember that men and women were equally involved in marriage settlement negotiations which, naturally, involved property arrangements. In some cases, women were not directly involved, however, indirectly they were via family members.[4] As shall be explored more fully later, both men and women had equally vital, though distinctly different, roles to play in assuring the family's place within the local community.

Much discussion has revolved around the private and public spaces of the house and the wider spaces within the larger scope of society. Studying Household as a place of shared interaction, where the 'job descriptions' for men and women are equitable although not always equal, renders arguments about gendered space as less potent. It challenges the belief that the "characteristic aspects of male and female roles in social, cultural, and economic systems can all be related to a universal, structural opposition between domestic and public domains of activity."[5] Although women dominated certain aspects of family and household life, including housework and childcare, this was not a male-free zone: men often spent significant amounts of time

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[1] T. Lummis and J. Marsh, *The Woman's Domain: Women and the English Country House* (London, 1990), p. 1.
[2] O. Hill and J. Cornforth, *English Country Houses: Caroline 1625-1685* (London, 1966), p. 9.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 10.
[4] S. W. Hall, *Women According to Men: The World of Tudor-Stuart Women* (Walnut Creek, California, 1996), p. 145.
[5] M. Zimbalist Rosaldo, "Women , culture and society: a theoretical overview" in M. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (eds.), *Women, Culture and Society* (Stanford, 1974), p. 35.

actively involved in the home. Not only did much of men's (as well as women's) paid labour take place at home, but men performed some household tasks (and they were responsible for aspects of child raising, especially with older sons). Men retained considerable emotional investment, authority, and physical presence in the home and they had distinctive roles to play.[6] Simply because women lived much of their lives in the Household and because it is difficult for us to imagine such an institution as an integrated social culture, "we therefore risk distorting women's experience if we go too far in de-emphasizing the public sphere," or the private one, I might add.[7]

In most cases, women handled some of the financial affairs and the day-to-day management of the household. "Most men conceded rule of the house and servants to their wives — subject, of course, to the man's overall jurisdiction."[8] Much evidence of this can be found.[9] Women themselves either did the 'housework' or supervised the servants on those tasks, most of whom were female.[10] Conduct books stress the duty of women to *manage* domestic affairs. Certainly, there was more to the reality of the situation in the Household than just gendered delineations of space and roles; "actual arrangements *no doubt* depended on the personality and skills of the individuals involved," and it was not simply divided according to gender.[11]

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[6]R. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society*, p. 306.

[7]R. Hawley and B. Levick (eds.), *Women in Antiquity: new assessments* (London, 1995), p. 13; according to ancient Pythagorean doctrines, "women are the most basic foundation of an *oikos*" (Household), p. 125. Aristotle, Book I, VI, states "the master and mistress should, therefore, give personal supervision, each to his or her special department of the household work....in estates managed through stewards, inspections must be frequent;" also, stewards need the good example by both mistress and master," G. C. Armstrong, trans., *Oeconomica* (London, 1935), p. 341.

[8]S. W. Hall, *Women According to Men*, p. 43; it was the husband's duty to *delegate* authority within the household, "the man must divide the offices and affairs of the house with his wife, giving her authority over all things in his absence, and his presence also, over household matters and such things as are proper and agreeable to that sex, causing her to be feared, reverenced and obeyed of the children, men-servants and maidservants, as himself," P. de la Primaudaye, *The French Academie* (London, 1586), p. 508. This quote suggests an equality of responsibility and respect even though, technically, the actual jobs themselves may be different.

[9]See the case of Lady Elizabeth Kytson one who oversaw the accounts of her noble household, K. Mertes, *The English Noble Household 1250-1600: Good Governance and Political Rule* (Oxford, 1988), p. 54.

[10]S. Mendelson, *The Mental World*, pp. 189-90. Because women had to be adept at handling the business of household, they had to be necessarily educated in the arts of reading, writing, housewifery and 'marketing', that is, taking care of the 'Household' affairs; see S. W. Hall, *Women According to Men*, pp. 142-144.

[11]R. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society*, p. 120; he discusses examples of women managing the household on pp. 120-1. It is rather desperate special pleading to admit as much and their claim "if the household was the proper place for women, then the household could *sometimes* become a female space," S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, p. 204; italics mine.

The organization and management of the Household followed late medieval models of organization and ritual.[12] Aristotle had written that "a good wife should be the mistress of her home, having under her care all that is within it, according to the rules we have laid down. She should allow none to enter without her husband's knowledge...She alone should have knowledge of what happens within, whilst if any harm is wrought by those from without, her husband will bear the blame."[13] Moreover, she should "exercise control of the money spent on such festivities as her husband has approved, keeping...within the limit set by law upon expenditure, dress, and ornament; this, then, is the province over which a woman should be minded to bear an orderly rule; for it seems not fitting that a man should know all that passes within the house."[14] It is difficult to find, in fact, an aspect of the 'Household' in which women were not involved and those practices continued in the early modern period. Women *and* men took part in management as well as masques, dining, entertainment and ceremonies in the house. Depictions in painting, tapestries and stonework supports this full spectrum of mutual involvement.[15]

Spaces: Buildings and Architecture

Not only everyday life and activity but also the houses and estates themselves help us understand the relationships of structure and individual. Hence, we turn to the relationship of the individual family and their 'property' within the local setting. It was the Norman Conquest that marked the rise of the manor (or 'estate' as it came later to be known) as the most prominent social institution of the country.[16] The Lords of manors held great influence by means of the additional rights to hold office that went with owning the land. The definition of manor

[12] B. A. Hanawalt, *The Ties That Bound: peasant families in Medieval England* (Oxford, 1986); G. S. Thomson, *Life in a Noble Household 1641-1700* (London, 1937); M. St Clare Byrne (ed.), *The Elizabethan Home: discovered in two dialogues* (London, 1925); F. Swabey, *Medieval Gentlewomen: Life in a Gentry Household in the Latter Middle Ages* (New York, 1999).

[13] Aristotle, *Oeconomica*, Book III: I, Ross. 140. Lines 1-12, G. C. Armstrong, trans., p. 401.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] P. Thornton, *Seventeenth-Century Interior Decoration in England, France and Holland* (New Haven, 1978) provides a thorough analysis of interior 'spaces' and avoids making comparisons based on gender issues. Material culture is another aspect of Household that could plausibly be a part of this study. Thornton substantiates many of the other claims made in this chapter with respect to how the homes were used to represent power, good taste and in addition, to serve as accommodation for travellers, particularly one's superiors.

[16] W. A. Copinger, *Manors of Suffolk: notes on their history and devolution, vol. 1* (London, 1905-11), p. vii. F. W. Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond: three essays in the early history of England* (Cambridge, 1897), see essay number 1, chapter 6 for a discussion of the manor and 'vil' where he concludes that the proper definition of '*manerium*' includes more than just the building of a residence. The Domesday terminology implies an economic (in addition to a legal and social) function of the institution that was tied to the local and central levels of community authority and governance.

refers to an entire estate of the ruler or lord with a village community in villeinage upon it. A manor became "a complex institution partaking of the character of an estate and of a unit of local government" in which the ancient principles of communal action and communal responsibility were still fully alive even with the piecemeal overlay of common law. This, in turn, institutionalized society to a system of personal rights and relations.[17]

Much attention has been focussed on architecture and how it changed in the seventeenth-century and how it reflected changing needs and economies.[18] For the landed gentry, then, the overarching concern was not so much about division within the house (into 'private' and 'public' spaces for men and women); thus, the structure of the 'Household' was not about segregation but about functionality and decorum. In matters of theory, architects such as Inigo Jones (given his reading of Vasari) were torn between the so-called 'masculine' and 'feminine' aspects of architectural design. According to that Renaissance philosophy, the masculine was represented by minimalist classicism, whereas the feminine was more ornamental in a mannerist style.[19] People referred to the separate 'wings' of houses in which the idealized model of segregation followed the example of the rooms for the King and Queen. The separate spaces were distinct but functionally equal. The social position of an individual, man or woman, was more a factor in how one 'Household' was compared to another than how one area of the building was as compared to another area — the sections were not designed or divided on the basis of gender.

When it comes to looking at the relationship between women and architecture, it appears that women had an integral part in designing and financing any building projects as well as in managing the Household.[20] Lady Elizabeth, wife of Sir Thomas Berkley, designed a banqueting house beside the great pool at Callowdon House in Warwickshire. It was "the polite

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[17] *Ibid.*, p. viii.

[18] "For the aristocrat and the landed gentry, the great house and estate were of supreme importance, " A. Maguire, "The Joy of Building as Shown by the 'Disposition Within Through the Seventeenth Century," in M. Airs (ed.),*The Seventeenth Century Great House* (Oxford, 1995), p. 34.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 47; for more on Jones' style and how he handled gendered bodies and spaces see J. Peacock, "Inigo Jones as a Figurative Artist," in L. Gent and N. Llewellyn (eds.), *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture c. 1540-1660* (London, 1990), pp. 154-179; C. Albano, "Visible bodies: cartography and anatomy," in A. Gordon and B. Klein (eds.), *Literature, Mapping and the Politics of Space in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 89-105 has a section on 'gendered spaces' which discusses the male/female dichotomy as it appeared in mapping, which I would classify as another form of visual 'art'.

[20] A. Gomme, "Architecture," in B. Ford (ed.), *The Cambridge Cultural History: 17th Century Britain* (Cambridge, 1992)states "soon after 1615 the Countess of Pembroke build a house at Houghton Conquest in Bedfordshire" (p. 53). What is significant in his chapter is the symmetrical treatment he gives to both men or women property owners and financiers.

work of the Lady Elizabeth, Wife of Sir Thomas Berkley...and the retired cell of her soul's soliloquies to God her creator."[21] Women were also involved in the creation and upkeep of chapels in their homes. Lady Magdalen Montagu at Battle in Sussex "built a chapel in her house...and there placed a very fair altar of stone."[22] Lady Frances Hobart, in a similar fashion, converted some of her lower rooms in Chapelfield House (Norwich) into a chapel.[23]

For women, "their architecture, like their spelling, was marked by a certain 'originality'; their houses betray them as gifted designers imperfectly acquainted with architectural decorum."[24] In the '*loggia* mania' of the seventeenth-century, it was the Countess of Shrewsbury who was the first to build a *loggia* on the entrance to her house, Hardwick Hall.[25] The design drew attention to the large windows which were adorned with ornate strap work ornament intertwined with Bess's initials and countess's coronet. In a similar fashion, Mary, the Dowager Countess of Pembroke in c.1615 hired Inigo Jones to build two front loggias at Houghton Conquest in Bedfordshire. She encouraged him to make them the centerpieces of the otherwise quite conventional Jacobean style.[26] Form and decoration were important considerations for men and women whether in the design of their homes or in their daily choice of dress and behaviour. They were about appearance as much as function.[27] The purpose of the loggia can be linked to the ancient Greek *stoa* where philosophers gathered for intellectual discourse, and the fact that women were involved in the adding of them to their estates makes a statement about the connection between women, intellectual life, and their relationships with buildings. Loggias also appeared in the backgrounds of portraits and people knew how to read the significance of

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[21] J. Smyth, *Lives of the Berkeleys* [1618], II, (ed.) Sir J. Maclean (Gloucester, 1883), p. 362.
[22] A. Ricketts, "The Country House Chapel in the Seventeenth Century," in M. Airs, ed., *The Seventeenth Century Great House*, p. 93.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 94.
[24] M. Abbott, *Family Ties*, p. 62 .
[25] Loggia is defined as 'a gallery open on one or more sides, sometimes pillared: it may also be a separate structure, usually in a garden', in P. Henderson, "The Loggia in Tudor and Early Stuart England: The Adaptation and Function of Classical Form," in L. Gent (ed.), *Albion's Classicism: The Visual Arts in Britain, 1550-1660* (New Haven, 1995), p. 124; descriptive term: 'loggia mania' is used on p. 111.
[26] A listing of Inigo Jones' authenticated works appears in H. M. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of English Architects, 1600-1840* (London, 1978); for this particular reference see pp. 473-4.
[27] In one story, Sir Nicholas Bacon, the Lord Chancellor was chided by Elizabeth for having an 'unimpressive house'. In response, he added an L-shaped wing which contained a long gallery which was set above a loggia. Both these structures had become a necessary establishment for the 'great house' and this was emphasized by "its continuous movement into a more prominent position: from the interior court to the garden and the facade where its impact was immediate," P. Henderson, "The Loggia," p. 137.

them.[28] The world of the real and the symbolic is therefore linked to classical traditions of design, stories and people.

The Country House

There is no doubt that the house is tied to the land which "has not ceased to represent and fetishize concepts and relationships beyond its mere materiality, and the country house does still represent power."[29] The possession and management of a country house remained the supreme measure of political, economic and social status throughout the seventeenth century.[30] An entire genre of "country house discourse interpellated (and, thus, constructed) social identities; gender, race and class in particular did not precede revived and redefined cultural practices like hospitality or cultural forms like the country house or the country house poem."[31] Mark Girouard placed the buildings in their socio-economic milieu as monuments to power, not simply to art and architecture.[32] Alice T. Friedman proposed the country house "as an icon for power, legitimacy, and authority that pops up in all kinds of places (including, of course, literature)."[33] The 'Household' was the place where power was constructed, conferred and displayed at the beginning of the sixteenth century and on into the seventeenth century.[34] We can make use, then, of architecture, that is, the 'structure' to limn the suggestive argument about 'household' and roles and responsibilities. "Architecture made manifest the gendered dynamics of noble performance."[35]

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[28] Space in portraits was given symbolic meaning. In one of Elizabeth I and her Garter Knights (1576), there is a great procession along a loggia where Elizabeth stands in her own arched space and all the rest are paired up under arches, A. M. Hind, *Engraving in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, part 1, "The Tudor Period" (Cambridge, 1952), plates 52-56.

[29] K. Boyd McBride, *Country House Discourse in Early Modern England: a cultural study of landscape and legitimacy* (Aldershot, 2001), p. 14. I am grateful to Dr. A. Gow bringing this reference to my attention.

[30] As McBride clarifies it though, the demarcation and marketing of that status changed after the Restoration; for more on this see, "Simulacra of the Country House," *Country House Discourse*, chapter five.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[32] M. Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: a Social and Architectural History* (New Haven, 1978).

[33] A. T. Friedman, *House and Household in Elizabethan England: Wollaton Hall and the Willoughby Family* (Chicago, 1989), p.10.

[34] Boyd McBride, *Country House Discourse*, p. 19; W. A. McClung, *The Country House in English Renaissance Poetry* (Berkeley, 1977), traces the origins of the Country-House genre and also links the architecture and poetry of the subject together. McClung states that "the virtues of these estates...are public and somewhat diffuse rather than private and ideal. That is, they are virtues of economics and human relationships touching upon all the classes of society embraced within the poems" (p. 105).

[35] Boyd McBride, *Country House Discourse*, p. 13; M. Howard, "Self-Fashioning and the Classical Moment in Mid-Sixteenth-Century English Architecture," in L. Gent and N. Llewellyn (eds.), *Renaissance Bodies*, pp. 198-217 states "like dress, the outward appearance of architecture became part of the act of self-fashioning one's public image" (p. 199). Moreover, paintings of the time also displayed this architecture in the background to support the sitter's representation of status and authority (p. 204).

The "performance of legitimacy demanded a fitting stage — the country house" and this 'performance of legitimacy' could take various forms, from how one dressed to what carriage one travelled in.[36] One woman requested servants as part of her allowance; "it is an undecent thing for a gentlewoman to stand mumping alone, when God hath blessed their lord and lady with a great estate."[37] The house, the accoutrements of dress, furnishings, and servants, all went together. No item should be presumed by us as insignificant because "English noblewomen who wielded power seem to have been cautious in their dress."[38] Taking things rather to the extreme, "the almost nunnish aura of Anne's [Anne Clifford] 'study-bedroom' stopped at its door."[39] The public rooms were to be "ostentatious, with rich tapestries, ornamental plaster work, oak wainscotting and many family portraits not just to proclaim her own standing but to make her high-ranking visitors feel at home."[40]

Power and legitimacy are clearly tied to certain patterns of behaviour and that behaviour was linked to space such as in the great hall. "Both social practice and architectural form expressed the hierarchical world view that linked one social class to another", thereby mixing women and men of all classes.[41] The hall defined the relationship of all individuals to each other and to the land on which the great hall and, by extension, the country house, was dependent (at least in theory) for provision.[42] The hall remained important throughout the seventeenth-century because it housed the old values upon which nobility was dependent for its authority and legitimation and, furthermore, it was the 'stage' for hospitality.

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[36]The relationship of women to their world of representation and possession is the basis of the book by M. Pointon, *Strategies for Showing: Women, Possession, and Representation in English Visual Culture 1665-1800* (Oxford, 1997). Much of this 'performance' culture is captured in visual art. Thus, the interpretation of artistic representations means that it allows one "to search out and analyse the allocation of roles and identities between the genders in order to understand the dynamics of any social system [the individual and the institution]," E. Fox-Genovese, "Placing Women's History in History," *New Left Review*, 133 (1982), p. 15.

[37]Elizabeth Spencer, [1594], quoted in McBride, *Country House Discourse*, p. 50.

[38]*Ibid.*, p. 94. See chapter 4 in this thesis for an elaboration of the idea that mode of attire has something to 'say' about status, authority and agency.

[39]*Ibid.*, p. 53.

[40]R. T. Spence, *Lady Anne Clifford: Countess of Pembrooke, Dorset and Montgomery (1590-1676)*,(Gloucestershire, 1997), p. 218.

[41]K. Boyd McBride, *Country House Discourse*, p. 54.

[42]On the vertical and horizontal alignment of society, see William A. McClung, *The Country House*, p. 92; McBride, *Country House Discourse*, p. 56 and more generally, K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities* (2000).

Household management

It is an ongoing challenge to understand the mutual relation between the structures and the individuals within historical institutions. Much historical study and "a good deal of social theory, especially that associated with structural sociology has treated agents as much less knowledgeable that they really are."[43] A related problem is an effect of 'practical consciousness' (the restriction that agents are under when they try and explain their knowledgeability of their situation) meaning that our sources are limited because an agent's discursive style is restricted. When discussing individual agents and their respective structures as they coexist within the 'Household', we should keep in mind that "to be a human being is to be a purposive agent, who both has reasons for his or her activities and is able, if asked, to elaborate discursively upon those reasons (including lying about them)."[44] It is important to remember, too that "an agent ceases to be such if he or she loses the capability to 'make a difference' , that is, to exercise some sort of power."[45] Moreover, it is of the first importance to recognize that circumstances of social constraint in which individuals 'have no choice' are not to be equated with passivity. Social institutions are not like structures of domination, rather they allow "power within social systems which enjoy some continuity over time and space presumes regularized relations of autonomy and dependence between actors or collectivities in contexts of social interaction."[46] For example, the deferential are not without agency. All forms of dependence offer some resources whereby those who are subordinate can influence the activities of their superiors. This is known as the 'dialectic of control' in social systems.[47] If we simply take the conduct literature as the basis for how society functioned, as some scholars do, then we severely limit our perspective. Joan Klein, a feminist theoretician, "*suspects* that actual life was different from 'theological assumptions about women's place.'"[48] She also states that "only an exceptional woman...was able to escape the

[43] A. Giddens, *The Constitution of Society* (Berkeley, 1985), pp. xxx.

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 3; Giddens further states, "the study of practical consciousness must be incorporated into research work" (p. xxx).

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 14 ; I add, no matter how small the portion of power or difference.

[46] *Ibid.* It is worth noting, "resources are media through which power is exercised, as a routine element of the instantiation of conduct in social reproduction" (p. 16).

[47] See A. Giddens, *Constitution of Society*, p. 19 ; S. Hindle, *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, c. 1550-1640* (London, 2000), comments on the longstanding debate about the nature of power relations, "the state is not to be viewed exclusively as a set of institutions; rather, it is a network of power relations which become institutionalized to a greater or lesser extent over time"; moreover, "state and society are not separate; rather they interpenetrate one another" (p.19). These relationships will be examined further in chapter 4.

[48] J. L. Klein, *Daughters, Wives and Widows*, p. xii; italics mine to emphasize the habit of some scholars to leave themselves a 'way out' of having to explain the incoherence between prescriptive literature and the reality of experience that is found in letters, diaries, and accounts by both men and women.

restrictions that her father, her husband, and her society imposed upon her."[49]

Unusual Circumstances?

It was during the Civil War in England that women used any and all resources at their disposal to protect their Household. Historians' interpretations vary as to whether their 'heroic' actions were due to the unusual circumstances or whether they were an extension of normal activity.[50] In a pattern of contradiction we have seen before, it can be asserted that "the overwhelming majority of wives adopted without question the religious and political opinions of their husbands"[51] and yet Elizabeth Cholmley, a supporter of Parliamentarians in a 'very earnest and firm' manner, when told of the deceitful actions of Parliamentarians subsequently changed her mind.[52] Women were actively involved in different ways such as petitioning, as well as in displaying their religious and political opinions. They were used in important missions as emissaries or to gather intelligence. As a result of their beliefs and actions, women, either alone or in partnership with their husbands, paid the price of having their estates confiscated for Royalist activities. Women made decisions about financial contributions to one side or the other in the war. In one case, the donation of money to fund the king's war chest was initiated by Lady Denbigh and Lady Killigrew and they were backed by the queen.[53] Women were responsible, due to the absence of their husbands, for the defense of their homes against attacks and sieges by hostile troops. Well known examples include Lady Brilliana Harley at Brampton Bryan Castle, Lady Anne Savile at Sheffield Castle, Charlotte, Countess of Derby at Lathom House, and Lady Mary Bankes at Corfe Castle.[54] There are many recorded cases of the "immediate and dramatic result of such absences" whereby "a much greater number of women than in the pre-war period were required to shoulder powers and responsibilities relating to the running of the

[49] *Ibid.*, p. xiii; the word 'society' is used frequently in such a way to imply men only.
[50] See, for example, N. H. Keeble, *Cambridge Companion to Writing of the English Revolution* (Cambridge, 2001), Part 3: Female Voices, pp. 127-180. In R. Cust and A. Hughes (eds.), *The English Civil War* (London, 1997), there is no specific chapter that discusses the involvement of women in any of the subheadings: politics, religion and society and culture, nor is there reference to women in any of the contributions.
[51] C. Durston, *Cromwell's major-generals: godly government during the English revolution* (Manchester, 2001), p. 88; sharing *opinions* of one's husband or wife does not directly translate into corresponding submissive *action*.
[52] H. Cholmley, *Memoirs of Sir Hugh Cholmley Knt. And Bart.* (Malton, 1870), p. 41; and see too, my BA (Hons) thesis, *An Issue of Blood* (1999) for 'normative' examples of women's agency and activity during the Civil Wars and Interregnum.
[53] Cecilia, Countess of Denbigh, *Royalist Father and Roundhead Son: being the memoirs of the first and second earls of Denbigh 1600-1675* (London, 1915), pp. 165-6.
[54] A. Fraser, *Weaker Vessel*, pp. 163-184.

[Household]."[55] Lady Brilliana Harley did not always agree with the advice or opinions of her husband, Sir Robert, although they had agreed that she should make the decisions while he was in London. She was convinced that it was best to protect the family's interests and she assured her son, Edward, that she had "no desire that a stranger should come to look to your father's business."[56] In general, "wives letters to their husbands usually reported what they had done; they did not solicit advice about what they might do."[57] William Blundell described his wife, Anne, as "the Ark who hath saved our little cockboat at Crosby from sinking in many a storm and acknowledged that she had been largely responsible for keeping the family from complete ruin during these years."[58] Sir Henry Vane left the care of the domestic affairs entirely to his wife.[59] When wives stayed on the estate and did not go with their Royalist husbands into exile on the Continent, they then typically assumed the role of estate manager and remained active in financial dealings at this time.[60]

The reason why so much attention and credit was given to women who managed the 'Household' is because the institution was a vehicle of the socio-economic power which went with the ownership of landed estates. In many cases, it was the negotiation of an advantageous marriage which contributed to the building, renovating or purchase of estates thereby involving a man and woman equally in the transaction.[61] Even though the husband 'acquired' the wife's landed property upon the marriage, it was not an automatic process but, rather, it was something that was negotiated in the marriage settlement. It was largely the wife's duty to assume the responsibilities of running the 'Household' and to rear the children.[62] She was expected and

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[55]C. Durston, *Cromwell's major-generals*, p. 91.

[56]T. Taylor Lewis (ed.), *The Letters of Lady Brilliana Harley*, Camden Society, 58 (1854), pp. 150-151.

[57]S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, p. 310, "even in normal times, as widow and guardians of heirs, women could be solely responsible for the preservation and improvement of the family estates," *Ibid.*

[58]M. Blundell (ed.), *The Letters of William Blundell to his Friends* (London, 1933), pp. 10, 54.

[59]V. A. Rowe, *Sir Henry Vane the Younger* (London, 1970), p. 279.

[60]A number of such women include Anne Fanshawe, Margaret Cavendish, Mary Verney and Isabella Twysden. See F. P. Verney, *Memoirs of the Verney Family During the Civil War*, p. 242; M. Loftis (ed.), *Memoirs of Ann, Lady Halket and Anne, Lady Fanshawe* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 119, 122, 135, 140; *The Journal of Sir Roger Twsden, part 4*, pp. 137-201; F. Bamford (ed.), *A Royalists Notebook: the commonplace book of Sir John Oglander* (London, 1936), p. 107 details the death of the wife of Sir John Oglander.

[61]J. T. Cliffe, *The World of the Country House in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven,1999), p. 11. Unfortunately, Cliffe chose to title his first chapter, "Houses Fit For Gentlemen," which makes one wonder where the women lived.

[62]W. Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties* (London, 1622), pp. 315, 317, 367; also see A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination*, pp. 173-4, 177-9; H. J. Habukkuk, *Marriage, Debt and the Estates System: English Landownership 1650-1950* (Cambridge, 1994); L. Bonfield, *Marriage Settlements, 1601-1740: the adoption of the strict settlement* (Cambridge, 1983); K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities* (2000).

required to have administrative skills as well as practical ones. "Some women were not content simply to perform the functions which were regarded as falling within the female domain; they wanted additional outlets for the employment of their talents and energy."[63] For instance, Sir John Lowther was full of praise for the book-keeping skills of his wife, Lady Mary.[64]

At times other types of business opportunities than food, clothing and children, consumed women. "What is particularly striking about the business activities of gentlewomen is the extent to which they became involved in estate management."[65] Sometimes, when the husband was away on business, the wife assumed the responsibility, whereas in other cases, this was due to the fact that the husband may be incapacitated in some other way (sickness, imprisonment). It was not uncommon for the wife to deal with the estate stewards or to settle wage disputes and they were involved in the recruiting of staff that sometimes came through networks among relatives or other households. "In a few households it was the squire's wife who exercised an oversight of the activities of the steward, either because she was the dominant partner or because her husband was incapacitated or heavily engaged in other matters."[66] Women had to take on the duties of running the household and estate while their husbands were away in Parliament or otherwise engaged in religious or political pursuits.[67] In conduct books there was considerable emphasis on cooperation and friendship between the couple. "Where records are sufficiently complete, they suggest that most men tended to consult their wives on important matters, such as large purchases, or the careers and marriages of children."[68] "In many gentry families the relationship between the squire and his wife was one of mutual affection and

[63] J. T. Cliffe, *The Country House*, p. 71; R. Tittler, *Townspeople and Nation: English Urban Experiences, 1540-1640* (Stanford, 2001), chapter 8, pp. 177-197, reminds us that women were capably involved in business, politics, religious matters and material culture of their time, as with the example of Joyce Jefferies, a spinster who lived in the cathedral city of Hereford until her death in 1648. What is interesting about her story is that it tells of a woman's experience in a city, providing us with details about her occupation as a moneylender, her social and cultural networks and her interests in the wider world.

[64] Surtees Society, cxci (1976-7), pp. 62-3.

[65] J. T. Cliffe, *The World of the Seventeenth Century Country House*, p. 72; K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, p. 278 provides some examples of women who were involved in estate management. Having the wife involved in management positions was not a new development; D. R. Hainsworth, *Stewards, Lords and People: the estate steward and his world in later Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1997) indicates that during the reign of Elizabeth, courtiers tended to leave their wives to manage their estates...while they sought influence and the rewards of office at court. (p. 13, fn.21).

[66] *Ibid.*, p. 117.

[67] J. Moody (ed.), *The Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady: the Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, 1599-1605* (Sutton, 1998) provides good examples of Lady Hoby's multiple activities. "She is revealed in her diary as a good business women" (p. 48).

[68] W. Coster, *Family and Kinship in England 1450-1800* (London, 2001), p. 65.

respect."[69] When the relationship was anything less than close and trusting, it was common for the woman to leave the husband either by mutual agreement or simply to go to another estate of her own volition.

Sir Robert Sidney instructed his wife, Lady Barbara, to take care of the Household management now that he was "a husband that is now drawn into the world and the actions of yt as there is now way to retire myself without trying fortune further."[70] Sir Robert had proposed to hire an estate manager; Lady Barbara saw this as usurping her authority; and he then wrote, "neyther is it anyway my meaning to take any authorite of the hous from you; but all things shall still be commaunded by you; onely the steward shall take directions from you and yeald accounts to you, and doe those things which inded is unfitt for you to trouble yourself withall."[71] Women had their own money and, in some cases, brought land to the marriage that made building possible.[72] The wives typically were at home managing the estate when the husbands were at Court where the political favours were distributed. Thus the lives of women "reveal the disjunction between the patriarchal ideals of country house discourse and the expectations of at least some early modern women."[73]

Bess Hardwick ran a 'woman-oriented household' where the chief of Bess's gentlewomen was paid three times as much as her husband who was also employed in the household.[74] Anne Clifford's story is often cited especially about her fight for her rightful inheritance. She made decisions about how to manage her money that came in part through inheritance and in part through successful investment (in land); by 1650 she was one of the wealthiest landowners in England. She was involved in direct management of everything in the

[69]J. T. Cliffe, *World of the Seventeenth Century Country House*, p. 74.The intricacies of how the marriage relationship actually worked will be discussed fully in chapter 4.

[70]Letter from Sir Robert Sydney to Lady Sydney, 26 October 1593. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord de L'isle & Dudley Preserved at Penshurst Place*, C. L. Kingsford, ed. (London, 1934), 2: p. 145; see also B. K. Lewalski, "The Lady of the Country-House Poem," pp. 263-264.

[71]Letter from Viscount Lisle to Lady Lisle, 29 September 1609.*HMSSC Report, Sydney Papers*, 4: pp. 161-162; "Though the discourse of husbandry made the wives subservient to their husbands, Lady Barbara, like other noblewomen of the period, was nonetheless expected to oversee the management of the estate, especially in her husbands' absence., and these letters imply that she had some measure of authority within the household." (K. Boyd McBride, *Country House Discourse*, p. 69).

[72]M. Howard, *The Early Tudor Country House: Architecture and Politics 1490-1550* (London, 1987), p. 42; for a look at specific painting (patronage and innovation of men and women) during the Civil War and Interregnum periods, see J. Harris, *The Artist and the Country House: a history of country house and garden view painting in Britain 1540-1870* (London, 1979), pp. 8-52.

[73]McBride, *Country House Discourse*, p. 69.Two women come to mind who embarked on great building that reflected their expression of authority, Bess Hardwick (Elizabeth of Shrewsbury) and Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, Dorset and Montgomery.

[74]D. Loades, *Politics and the Nation*, pp. 72, 180.

'Household', from the preserving of the fruit to the collection of fees from her tenants. She displayed her authority and aristocratic power in the imagery of portraits, plaques and heraldic representations in addition to the practical power of running the business of 'Household'.[75] Anne used her fortune to assert her family's right to sovereignty by maintaining the medieval castles on her estates. The buildings themselves were imbued with sentiment and meaning and women could, and did, shape these meanings by the way they renovated or simply invested in them. Bess Hardwick and Anne Clifford used a discourse of legitimacy (in architecture, litigation, furnishings and physical appearance) to express and assert their authority in a traditional mode of expression that was typically male. These women "understood how to articulate their power on the land, how to use the semiotics of the [Household] to communicate an authority which is seemingly always already there."[76] They could insist on their rights because of their class, if in spite of their gender.

Visual Culture

One important aspect of understanding the Household, and the roles and representations of men and women within it, is visual culture, specifically painting. The House itself could be displayed in addition to the people within it; this form of representation became popular in seventeenth-century England.[77] "What distinguishes oil painting from any other form of painting is its special ability to render the tangibility, the texture, the lustre, the solidity of what it depicts."[78] Visual culture should not be overlooked because Art embodies cultural assumptions: few paintings are neutral.[79] Moreover, in contemporary scholarship one can see the development of a 'historical anthropology of images' or 'cultural history of images' approach. This approach involves reconstructing "the rules or conventions, conscious or unconscious,

[75]R. T. Spence, *Lady Anne Clifford*; B. Lewalski calls her "a (unusually) benevolent autocrat," *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 130.
[76]McBride, *Country House Discourse*, p. 78.
[77]"Art was inevitably intermingled with politics int his period, for the images proposed by art invariably carried some religious or political significance," G. Parry, *The Golden Age restor'd: the culture of the Stuart Court, 1603–42* (New York, 1981), p. 224; see too, T. N. Corns (ed.), *The Royal Image: Representations of Charles I* (Cambridge, 1999).
[78]J. Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London, 1972), pp. 87-88, 90; the debate about 'representation' is ongoing although "a painting was painting, that is, a medium of access to the world that was knowingly used, that was ostensibly situated between the eye and the representation...[it] became an especially apt medium for rendering an account of the experiences of human reality, of the living," J. A. Maravall, *Culture of the Baroque*, p. 259.
[79]P. O. Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: a history of women in Western Europe, volume one 1500–1800* (London, 1997), p. 25.

governing the perception and interpretation of images within a given culture."[80] The study of historical imagery has moved far from earlier attempts, such as the feminist approach whereby art was seen from the perspective of gender (replacing social class), and on to a more integrated approach involving images and texts together that are concerned with the reception of the art in addition to what the images represent.[81]

Portraits are of special significance for purposes of understanding representation, reception and cultural interpretation. The commissioning and display of portraits were not necessarily only of members of the family but of other important friends, ancestors and relations, kings and queens — perhaps intended to contemplate their characters or to be inspired to imitate their virtues.[82] It is important to note, however, that portraits were not necessarily 'realist' representations. The painted portrait was part of a genre, therefore subject to a number of conventions wherein the "postures and gestures of the sitters and the accessories or objects represented in their vicinity follow a pattern and are often loaded with symbolic meaning."[83] The conventions and symbolic meanings were understood by men and women. As 'Household' managers, women were both patrons and organizers of the Great Hall displays. Katherine Brydges, the fourth Earl of Bedford's wife, inherited a collection of sixteenth century portraits from her father and grandfather; and subsequently hung them in the Long Hall at Woburn. Lucy Harington, the wife of Edward the Earl of Bedford was a collector and well versed in the

[80]P. Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (New York, 2001), p. 180. A. Woodiwiss, *the visual in social theory* (New York, 2001), discusses the importance of incorporating the visual, as a necessary dimension, into sociological theory.

[81]For an opposing view see, S. Bann, *Under the Sign: John Bargrave as Collector, Traveller and Witness* (Ann Arbor, 1994): "the visual image proves nothing - or whatever it does prove is too trivial to count as a component in the historical analysis" (p. 122). Further evidence to the contrary will be presented in chapter 5 of this thesis in the discussion of 'self-representation' most notably.

[82]M. Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*, p. 101. It was not only in portraits that the Royal family was im initiated but also in the architectural style of their palaces; see S. Thurley, *Whitehall Palace: an architectural history of the Royal apartments, 1240-1698* (New Haven, 1999), for information on the intricacies of display, design and building of the 'Household'. The Queen's chambers were equally lavish as the King's for she "had a role to play politically, both domestically and internationally and the constant refurbishment and aggrandisement of her lodgings reflect this important role" (p. 116); M. R. Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England* (Philadelphia, 1987), chapters 5 and 6 give an overview of court culture and how it was imitated by other gentlefolk.

[83]P. Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, p. 25; additionally, even though paintings do not 'reflect' the visible world the way a photograph does, still images are valuable to the historian because they "can bear witness to what is not put into words," and "an image is necessarily explicit on issues that may be evaded more easily in texts," p. 31.

skill of painting.[84] In addition to being sitters and patrons, women were also artists. In the case of Mary Beale, she had her husband's support and he helped her keep the accounts, organized the flow of clients, bought materials and helped her with experiments for the pigments. By the 1670s, after two decades of building her career, she had become responsible for the major portion of her family's income.[85]

The study of 'Household' is, in effect, a study of a special kind of community and it "must be concerned with the study of the interrelationships of social institutions in a locality."[86] 'Household' was an integral part of the community, which is "not merely a geographical or political unit, but the unit of society in every context."[87] Household is also tied to 'kin' and 'networks' — an area where the wealth of information found in letters, diaries, and account books clearly shows the significant agency of women.[88] Studying 'Household', the house, the inhabitants and the community, implies that a coherent historical method would ideally have allowed for a convergence of records where all records that relate to a certain set of individuals in the past are gathered together and analysed. To integrate ideas about the social setting, the structure and functionality of the buildings, and the management of the household, the challenge is apparent. Not only is it difficult to assess personal writings but more nuanced judgements are also required. Consider this statement, "matters of taste in art and architecture are difficult to document at the best of times, and attitudes toward marriage and family life often go

[84] G. Thompson, *Life in a Noble Household: 1641-1700* (London, 1937), p. 287. See too, F. Borzello, *A World of Our Own, Women as Artists* (London, 2000); C. Lawrence (ed.), *Women and Art in Early Modern Europe: patrons, collectors, and connoisseurs* (Pennsylvania, 1998); R. Parker and G. Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (London, 1981), chapter two, "Crafty women and the hierarchy of the arts" (pp. 50-81) discusses women in England and Europe as artists of fine arts and decorative arts and their relationship to them. The authors state "the structures of difference [between men's and women's work] are between private and public activities, domestic and professional work" (p. 70) although it has been my conclusion, based on the empirical material, that this distinction is not a legitimate one.

[85] F. Borzello, *A World of Our Own*, p. 61; see also chapter 2, "The Celebrated Line of Women Artists, 1600-1750," *Ibid.*, pp. 50-77.

[86] C. Bell and H. Newby, *Community Studies* (London, 1971), p. 19; P. Withrington and A. Shepard (eds.), *Communities in early modern England* (Manchester, 2000), gives a good overview at pp. 1-17.

[87] J. A. Pitt-Rivers, *The People of the Sierra* (London,1954), p. 30-31, For more on the intricacies of the study of communities and related topics, such as household, see the explanation in A. Macfarlane, *Reconstructing Historical Communities* (Cambridge, 1977), chapter one, and "History, Anthropology and the Study of Communities," *Social History*, 5 (1977), pp. 631-652 gives an overview of the debate between historians and sociologists about the definition of community.

[88] D. C. Beaver, *Parish Communities and Religious Conflict in the Vale of Gloucester, 1590-1690* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1998) states "social life in early modern England was experienced primarily in the relations of kinship, friendship, and neighbourhood" (p. 50) and in his discussion of kin and household, he treats household as both an extended relationship that moves outside the one dwelling and involves the relationships between individuals. For more on the community and family relations, see K. Wrightson, *English Society*, pp. 44-57.

unrecorded."[89] It is difficult to evaluate and understand the private thoughts and feelings of individuals and our approach must be less direct and more through incidental evidence and inference. Taken across a broad spectrum of activity and social structure, however, some valuable conclusions can be made. It is important to incorporate the concept of the "period eye" (Baxandall's term) or put differently, to situate things in their cultural context. This is necessary because the mental skills of looking at art and architecture is part of the means of identifying the 'signification' of gesture, building materials, or clothes: it is about the interpretation of form. Furthermore, we can look to Gombrich's "mental set," that culturally relative skill set that beholders use. "A style, like a culture or a climate of opinion, sets up a horizon of expectation, a mental set, which registers deviations and modifications with exaggerated sensitivity. In noticing relationships the mind register tendencies."[90]

Why does 'Household' have to be divided into various subheadings as this chapter? This is because it is a rhetorical device that bears witness to the status of a home's builder, his or her's architectural talents and the activities of the inhabitants of the 'Household' as well as the place of a repository of evidence. In short, it is "a living record of human relationships which in itself reflects the ebb and flow of culture."[91] During the course of the seventeenth century, domestic planning changed whereby it came to reflect new methods of estate management, shifting political alliances, and changing fashions in personal display. Each generation changes the buildings it inherits to express and accommodate the relationships, habits of mind and beliefs which are all part of its distinctive culture.[92] However, one thing that remained constant was the importance of owning land to this class of society and this, too, should be considered as part of 'Household'.[93]

Not only should the analysis focus on the structure but it should also focus on the individual agent and their placement within the structure. For instance, "to date, little scholarly attention has been focussed on the issue of gender as it relates to architectural history. By reinserting the experiences of women into the analysis of architectural style (or later, as we shall

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[89]M. Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention*, p. 9.

[90]E. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, 5th revised ed. (Oxford, 1972), p. 53.

[91]A. Friedman, *Elizabethan House*, p. 5.

[92]C. Geertz, "Art as a Cultural System," in *Local Knowledge*, pp. 94-120.

[93]"The foundation of aristocratic wealth, power, and honour rested on the land," L. Stone , *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, p. 220; J. M. Rosenheim, *The Emergence of a Ruling Order: English Landed Society 1650- 1750* (London, 1997), clarifies Stone's statement further: "owning a country house was an essential qualification for membership of the local elites' and one's local seat...served as a power centre, a showplace for the display of authority" (p. 91).

see, portraiture) a process which involves looking at family structure and power relationships- we can better understand the dynamics of stylistic change as a function, in part, of social life."[94] Again we see the that individual situations and temperaments affected this ideology of what place women had in the social structure and what agency they had.[95] Yet, some scholars persist in their attempts to explain away the norm by saying things like, "we find attitudes toward upper -class women's roles in transition."[96]

It is by "being integrally connected to the histories of well-known country houses, the women and men described in this study take on a special importance: they allow us to link together specific relationships involving women...and individual buildings, producing a critical equation in the formation of architectural space."[97] This is exactly what the various chapters of this thesis do; they approach the analysis of men and women in a symmetrical fashion by using the same measuring tools. Women were intimately involved in the architectural space of the household and the relationships within it. Their experiences can be seen as expressions of a set of relationships and cultural attitudes, in particular those which assign value to activities associated with children, household structure and social life.[98] And, even though some scholars characterize the worlds of men and women at this time as separated, there were certainly frequent occasions for the cultures to intersect, such as when couples would entertain. Consider the following,

> If she was the mistress of a great house, moral and domestic excellencies had to be supplemented by social graces and an education at least good enough to enable her to entertain her husband's friends fittingly and to converse with them intelligently.[99]

In another activity, both men and women maintained extensive correspondence with friends and

[94]A. Friedman, *Elizabethan House*, p. 6; for a discussion of how women experienced and interpreted art and architecture see A. Friedman, "Architecture, Authority and the Female Gaze: Planning and Representation in the Early Modern Country House," *Assemblage* 18 (1992), pp. 40-61.

[95]K. Wrightson, *English Society*, p. 7; see his chapter 4 for a useful discussion of economic status and individual temperaments as determinants.

[96]A. Friedman, *Elizabethan House*, p. 49.

[97]*Ibid.*, p. 9; J. M. Rosenheim, *The Emergence of a Ruling Order*, pp. 92-94 discusses the use of space in the house as one of the ways that reflected changes in the social and personal meaning of gentility. "Three principal shifts [of space] draw attention: new means of display, partly in the placement of houses in their environments, partly in spatial arrangements and the way the contents of houses were made visible" (p. 92).

[98]In this particular study of the Willoughby family, the running of the household showed that a conflict between old and new ways of behaviour; "the husband maintained a large staff of officers and servants, insisting on traditional ceremony and on his rights over his wife's property and person; she, for her part, resisted him and claimed her right to an independent life at Court, in London, or wherever she chose to travel" (p. 9), A. T. Friedman, *House and Household in Elizabethan England: Wollaton Hall and the Willoughby Family* (Chicago, 1989).

[99]C. Hole, *The English Housewife in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1953), p. 99.

associates, and record-keeping of all kinds had become a mainstay of estate management. This could be attributed to the fact that the head of the household was frequently away on business trips.[100] In the case of the Willoughby brother and sister, Cassandra and Thomas, she took over the management of the house for a substantial period (and all that it entailed) while her brother was at Cambridge. She was responsible for repairing the buildings, restoring the gardens, directing the workmen, and keeping the furniture in repair. When it came to recreational activities, she regularly accompanied her brother on hunting escapades. Cassandra had great freedom and was able to enjoy a large library that contained many curiosities from collections that her father, Francis Willoughby, had begun as an eminent historian and founding member of the Royal Society. She was "included in virtually all the activities at Wollaton, with the exception of Thomas's lessons with his tutor."[101]

Given our contemporary mind set, it is hard to understand that women both accepted beliefs about their inferiority and yet, in many situations, transcended them. "They were neither passive nor oppressed victims, but rather human agents, making their history within a social structure which was not of their making."[102] It was a generally accepted belief in early modern England that men and women had separate social functions because God had made men and women differently.[103] This may be true in some sense but we should continue the sentence and state that they had distinct roles and responsibilities in managing the Household and in some cases these overlapped and were the exact same for practical purposes. Although I would agree that "the household was the most important economic unit," I cannot state conclusively that "it was difficult for a woman to survive outside it."[104] Contemporaries clearly recognised that in reality some women were able, intelligent, and more capable then men. The distinction between private and public realms is not so clear that one can state irrevocably, "in the smaller worlds of the towns and villages, an ordinary woman's pursuit of her *proper business* as a good wife and

[100] A. Friedman, *House and Household in Elizabethan England*, gives the example of Cassandra and her brother, Thomas, heir of Wollaton, pp. 159-160.

[101] *Ibid.*, p. 162.

[102] P. Crawford, *Women and Religion in England 1500-1720* (London, 1993), p. 1.

[103] *Ibid.*, p. 6. There may be some truth in this, especially when we think of the biological differences; men cannot bear children. However, this is not to say that women should be characterized, because of these differences, as "hidden in the shadow of the male world," nor is it correct to say that "men dealt with the public arena, women with the more obscure private sector," S. W. Hall, *Women According to Men*, p. 191.

[104] *Ibid.*, p. 8; Crawford brings up contradictions here again with politics and public administration, as well as the incoherence between the ideal and the real (in context of the discussion regarding 'private' and 'public' spheres). She uses the example of the two female Tudor monarchs and shows how they reconciled their duties within a predominately 'male' domain. In general, "the influence of the stereotypes of the good woman upon individual women and their lives is a difficult question. Certainly, ideals and practices differed" (p. 10).

mother might take her into the public sphere."[105] Some say that "while the creation of the country house helped to place domestic work and family life directly under women's control, it also opened up the possibility for an identification of women with the home and for the virtual exclusion of women from public life."[106] It is clear that the family was not a 'private' world, contrasted with a public one, but rather a meeting point between the public and private. As William Gouge put it, 'a conscionable performance of household duties, in regard to the end and fruit thereof, may be accounted a publike worke,' therein blurring their very distinctions.[107] Thus, "there was little which could be concealed in the seventeenth century: the most intimate family relationships must be laid bare at the request of the churchwarden or the constable, the overseer or the Justice of the Peace."[108]

According to the empirical sources, and taking into consideration the intricacies of managing the Household, one can conclude that women took a considerable share in the life and labour of the time. They worked at many occupations which, today, are exclusively undertaken by men; such as brewing, drawing straw for thatch, tempering mortar and the like. Doubtless, such work made them capable and self-assertive.[109] "Indoors the mistress ruled a kingdom within a kingdom."[110] She held active sway, and her office was no sinecure, for it was expected of her not merely to order what should be done, but to understand thoroughly how to do it, whether it was dealing with food, medicine, religious observation, finances and child rearing. Some male writers of the period agreed that women were invaluable and their accomplishments noteworthy. Daniel Tuvill wrote that "the male shall not be thought more worthy than the female in regard of his essence" because they were to be comprehended as similar in nature and that "if in anything he have the start and advantage, it is merely by accident and no way else."[111] Additionally, he explained that men have deliberately tried to busy women in domestical affairs in order to keep them away from directly competing with men in other employments, fearing that "if they had not surmounted us, they would at least have shown themselves our equals and

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[105] *Ibid.*, p. 9; my emphasis.
[106] A. Friedman, *Elizabeth House*, p. 49; to me this is completely too far reaching in its conjecture and conclusion.
[107] W. Gouge, *Domesticall duties*, pp. 18- 19.
[108] E. Trotter, *The Social Life of the Village Community with special references to the local community* (Cambridge, 1919), p.178.
[109] *Ibid.*, p. 184
[110] E. Godfrey, *Home Life under the Stuarts*, p. 229.
[111] D. Tuvill, *Asylum Veneris or a Sanctuary for Ladies: Justly Protecting Them, Their Virtues and Sufficiencies from the Foule Aspersons and Forged Imputations of Traducing Spirits* (1616), in J. L. Lievsay (ed.), *Essays Politic and Morall.* (Charlottesville, 1971), p. 140.

our parallels."[112]

To conclude, let us look at the text of a poem from 1645, wherein we observe just how "the well-managed country household was an "*Oiconomick-Government*," [thus] an example for the whole nation."[113] The Household then, transcended merely the local community, and appropriated a significant role and function for society as a whole.

> Where plenty, neatness, and a right
> Well-govern'd house yield full delight;
> Wherein you and your Lady give
> Example how the good should live....[114]

[112] *Ibid.*, p. 100.

[113] George Wither, *Vox Pacifica: a voice tending to the pacification of God's wrath; and...* (London, 1645), p. 184.

[114] Aston Cokaine, *Small Poems of divers sorts* (London, 1658), p. "141" ie 241. In a poem by Marvell, Bill-borow', the word 'house' embodies multiple meanings such as a building, its grounds, the present household, its ancestors, or to a moral or religious institution. In the poem the grounds turn into a human *institution* and the birds form model *households*, gardens express human intellectual capabilities and the wood consists of family 'trees', see J. Turner, *The Politics of Landscape*, pp 80-81.

Chapter Four — *Relationships: Family & Friends*

> *"In no other branch of historical study [household and family] are such dubious statements so confidently made, such flatly contradictory claims staked out"*[1]

This chapter will focus on relationships 'within' and 'without' Household. Specifically, I will look at the marriage relationship within the early modern patriarchal system and the broader societal framework that extends the partnership to a wider network of concentric circles of family and friends. These relationships will illustrate and explain just how women were able to enjoy many of the same freedoms of men when it came to exercising authority and status in the community. It was possible for the 'Household' to be both a man's castle and a woman's place at the same time; men and women had distinct roles and equal responsibilities in the Household. Networks were the core of a patronage-based, patriarchal society and every individual found him/herself part of a series of interrelated relationship systems. Discussing 'patriarchy' in early modern society involves opening up a wide range of material that is steeped in misogyny, yet we can question some of the long-standing assumptions about early modern society and especially the activity of women within what many consider a 'male dominated' world. Looking at both the formal and informal networks that men and women forged and maintained amongst their friends and family will allow us to see the malleable and flexible texture of the patriarchal system.

Gender study is inextricably linked to any study of patriarchy. Yet, it seems facile to conclude that "gender [...] determined the unequal allocation of power and prestige" within society or, can it continue to hold true that "the world view which assigned women a subordinate place was enshrined in institutions, from Parliament down to the humblest family?"[2] If we take 'Household' as the basis for this analysis then we can no longer agree with claims that women in history were a "muted group" with respect to the dominant male culture, or that women's culture was separate from men's.[3] The decision-making process in the Household was truly collective as described in law or domestic ideology. Wives were not only their husbands' 'helpmeets' they were also 'yokefellows'.[4] The ultimate location of authority in

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[1] P. Collinson, *Birthpangs of Protestant England: religious and cultural change in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (New York, 1988), p. 81.
[2] Mendelson, *Mental World*, p. 2.
[3] Eg. E. Ardener, "Belief and the Problem of Women," in J. La Fontaine (ed.), *The Interpretation of Ritual: essays in honour of A. I. Richards* (London ,1972), p. 135-58 who discusses the entirety of the 'counterpart model'.
[4] K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, p.65.

the Household lay with the master *and*, by delegation, with the mistress.[5] The structure of the Household set out responsibilities and privileges for every member and it also included the flexibility for individuals to interpret their roles in the pursuit of shared priorities. Although we do not have the comprehensive picture of how Household functioned on a day-to-day basis, it "stretches credibility to imagine that wives were simply passive enactors of their husbands' directions or mute spectators"; moreover, "it is certainly apparent that wives had a part to play in some of the most significant — therefore most often recorded decisions of the family cycle."[6]

Many 'gender' scholars have found the need to explain women's culture as separate from men's. However, in this view of networking within a patriarchal system, ideas of 'private and public' spheres of separate cultures fail to stand up to scrutiny. Some would argue that

> It is clear that [women] did not participate in the masculine culture appropriate to their social class. Aside from its association with the household, female culture in most of its guises represented the non-literate obverse of literate male culture, almost as if women sought to compensate for their lack of literate skills through other modes of expression. [7]

This denigration of women is typical in the secondary literature.[8] It is evident that we need to explore the relations between the elements in real life (as Household allows us to do) and then we will be in a more informed position with regards to separateness or divorce from society. Studying 'Household' in the way that is presented in this thesis allows men and women to be brought together not to be divided and to be understood in cooperative not competing relationships and power brokering against each other necessarily.[9] It would be better to begin in presuming the arrangements typically worked to mutual advantage rather than presume a constant repression and contest.

In spite of claiming that women were relegated to the sidelines in society, these same scholars will give women a substantial amount of agency. For "in the arena of family politics,

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[5] *Ibid.*, p. 64. The woman would herself become head of the Household upon her husband's death.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 65. I refer here to marriage negotiations and executrix duties at the time of their husband's death.

[7] S. H. Mendelson, *The Mental World*, p. 7; see too, S. Frye and K. Robertson (eds.), *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: women's Alliances in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1999).

[8] Women's lives and thoughts were supposedly so "intertwined in practice that their world view is liable to be divested of meaning when divorced from its social context," *Ibid.*, p.11.

[9] Mendelson states that men and women "worked in separate spheres" yet each sex remained sovereign in its own domain and equally valuable to the family economy, p. 1-2. The term 'contested sphere' is used by L. Orlin, *Private Matters and Public Culture in Post-Reformation England* (New York, 1994), p. 102 to describe a household where men and women cohabit. It is obvious that some scholars still see it as a place of opposition rather than cooperation.

women's informal authority was far greater than we might infer from their official standing in society at large."[10] Within any institutionalized structure or system, including early modern patriarchalism, individuals could find ways to negotiate their own advantage. Even after marriage, when their legal and economic rights were greatly reduced, women found "there were many ways to manipulate not only her husband, but the entire nexus of kin and neighbourhood."[11] Working various networks required practice, something that children (male and female) were taught from a young age and continued to develop for a lifetime. Therefore, it is incorrect to assume that if women kept their 'bids for power' to the 'private' family milieu, then their influence was tolerated in certain masculine 'spheres'. This assumption implies that the public display of feminine authoritative agency violated the canons of femininity.

Seventeenth-century society was no more monolithic than our own: many inherent inconsistencies and ambiguities blurred some of the supposed differences in the boundaries of responsibility between the sexes.[12] But let us assume that there might not exist a large degree of difference at all. There is ample documentation of women who had ambitions outside their limited domain and who managed to find avenues in which to pursue them. It involved more than simply encoding their 'masculine' urges into socially acceptable forms. One of these areas is that of womens' literary pursuits. Some studies indicate that during the Civil War women were more able to publish in a 'male-dominated world' of publication.[13] However, it has proven to be the habit for scholars to have focussed "on the extraordinary individual instead of surveying the general pattern of women's participation in the intellectual life of the [entire] century," thereby making it seem that womens writing was limited only to the turbulent times of the Civil war period and at other times, only involved a small minority of women when in fact the empirical material suggests otherwise, in spite of opposing views on the matter as illustrated by the following quote.[14]

> Conditioned to a patriarchal culture, women have had serious problems with the subject matter of their poetry [for one] as well. Women's place in literary life, if she survives to write at all, has been a place from which men grant her leave to write about

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 187.
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] S. H. Mendelson, *Mental World*, p. 189.
[13] *Ibid.* See also, N. Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England 1640-1660* (New Haven, 1994).
[14] M. J. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*. For instance, as R. Kegl, "The World I Have Made: Margaret Cavendish, Feminism, and the *Blazing World*," in M. L. Kaplan, D. Callaghan, V. Traub (eds.), *Feminist Readings of Early Modern Culture: emerging subjects* (Cambridge, 1996) suggests, it would be better to focus on the imperfect relationships in the Duchess of Newcastle's works and the subject positions that her writing suggests rather than keeping to such a restrictive account of women's intellectual lives as has been the habit.

either love or religion. Everything else threatens male turf. [15]

'Partnering' in a Patriarchal System

An entire history of women's oppression is well-known, one that stretches from Marx and Engels to contemporary scholarship. Frederick Engels claimed in 1881 that "the modern individual family is founded on the open or concealed domestic slavery of the wife."[16] Thinking like that propels us to consider what exactly were the historical mechanisms of patriarchal power, how was its theory propagated, and what were the women's responses to it? Bringing other disciplinary approaches into the analysis is helpful as evidenced by the following point of view, "seventeenth-century English domestic patriarchalism was a literary phenomenon- a concept of power derived from a literary source, the Bible, and codified in written documents."[17] Further questions would include, 'how does this look in the reality of everyday life? and who interprets the 'written' source material and how?'

The analysis in this chapter finds itself well-situated under the umbrella of 'the history of the family' debates. According to Keith Wrightson, "individual households were located within denser networks of locally-available kin and subject to more powerful kinship obligations."[18] Marriage fell under the control of parents and kin, which obviously includes males and females. Partners were selected by individual choice with parents and kin acting only as 'counterbalancing' forces.[19] The rigidities of patriarchy were heavily qualified by such expectations and frank recognition was given to the reality of marital conflict and female insubordination. Women were not repressed to the degree that might be inferred from idealized statements of patriarchal authority.[20] The relationship bond of marriage was relatively egalitarian in practice "despite the patriarchal assumptions of male authority embodied in law."[21] The system functioned not on unilateral parental involvement nor unilateral freedom of

[15] L. Berkinow, ed. *The World Split Open: Women Poets 1552-1950* (London,1979) p. 6.
[16] F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (New York, 1942), p. 137.
[17] M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*, p. 16.
[18] Keith Wrightson, "The Family in Early Modern England: Continuity and Change," S. Taylor, R. Connors and C. Jones (eds.), *Hanoverian Britain and Empire: Essays in Memory of Philip Lawson* (New York, 1996), p. 2; and see his *Earthly Necessities.*
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 8.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 10. Some may not agree with this assumption and I refer here primarily to the feminist critique which tends to focus on gender alone in family relationships; cf. S. Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1988); L. Pollock, "'Teach Her to Live Under Obedience'": The Making of Women in the Upper Ranks of Early Modern England," *Continuity and Change*, 4 (1989), pp. 231-58; A. Erickson, *Women & Property*; A Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination*; L. Gowing, *Domestic Dangers. Women, Words and Sex in Early*

choice of young people but on the basis of 'multilateral consent' of all interested parties.[22] This type of explanation appeals because it has "a general applicability, but also lends [itself] to the exploration and explanation of difference in any given generation or over time."[23] The family could also mean a group of persons (related or not) of the 'household family'. It "describes a structured but highly flexible framework which encompassed both households of different compositions and the changing membership of individual households (which might include spouses, children, servants, apprentices, sojourners or any combination of these)."[24] Dealing with systems in operation within an institution leads us to reconsider the ideology of conduct books, and possibly to define and redefine household roles and even to look at the legal system in a different light.

Patriarchy is indeed difficult to define; it is a word "which is very widely used, but, like the equivalent Marxist term 'bourgeois', seldom defined."[25] In twentieth-century literary and historical studies the term clearly implies "authoritarianism rather than a sharing of responsibilities," relations expressed between husband and wife expressed "in terms of authority and obedience, not consultation and consent."[26] Current interpretations strongly insist that patriarchalism also extended its *power* over the minds of women as well and not only into their scope of control. Thus patriarchalism should be understood, according to some, as an ideology that legitimized the use of mechanisms that devalue women's abilities and achievements in deference to those of the 'dominant' males. This view is in itself an ideological construct and the empirical evidence suggests it is a myth. Take for instance one interpretation of seventeenth-century life for women where "the society in which these women lived, and the air they breathed, was excessively patriarchal."[27]

Some see society as one in which the men set the limits against which some women persistently struggle but, regardless, we can still conclude that "the framework is being constantly challenged and to some extent renegotiated by women 'making a virtue of

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Modern London (Oxford, 1996).

[22]M. Ingram, *Church courts, sex and marriage in England 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 134-42.

[23]K. Wrightson, "The Family in Early Modern England," p. 17.

[24]*Ibid.*; see N. Tadmor, "The Concept of the Household-Family in Eighteenth-Century England," *Past & Present*, 151 (1996), pp. 111-140 for a detailed explanation.

[25]M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*, p. 3; she scrutinizes the generally accepted model of patriarchalism and shows women's writing was more than just an 'escape valve' for a victim of oppression, p. 3.

[26]*Ibid.*

[27]P. Higgins, "The Reactions of Women, with Special Reference to Women Petitioners," in Brian Manning (ed.), *Politics, Religion and the English Civil War* (New York, 1973), p. 222.

necessity'."[28] Networks were key to all relationships that existed in society. In the marriage relationship, in particular, the network of relations upon whom an individual and his or her family of origin could legitimately make a variety of claims was obviously expanded. This meant that marriage had a dimension of importance in a patronage society which it seldom has today.[29] For instance, trusts and land deals were common components of marriage arrangements which, in turn, were linked to patronage arrangements. It is almost redundant to say that marriages were arranged with finances involved as was the case for Josias Lambert. "Though it cannot be said with certainty, it is possible that this marriage was arranged, perhaps even before Josias Lambert died, as part of his debt transactions."[30]

One way to assess women's activity and agency is to consider "the evident importance of female communities — mothers and daughters, extended kinship networks, close female friends — as a counterweight to patriarchy."[31] These communities or networks challenge the supposed rigidity and pervasiveness of patriarchal attitudes and practices in seventeenth-century England.[32] Empirical material about the relationships between spouses contrast sharply to the formal patriarchy expressed in law and in prescriptive literature on family roles. The actual experience of patriarchy and of partnership was not mutually exclusive,[33] nor were all familial relationships authoritarian and unopposed.[34] Family obedience books described an idealized set of rules governing the household relationships. "It is highly unlikely [!] that many of these ordinary people recognized the potential conflict between the actual and the ideal household and tried to account for or eliminate the gap. That was left for their literate intellectual and social superiors."[35] Proof of the intersections of both worlds and the reconciliation of real and

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[28] E. Hoby, *Virtue of Necessity*, p. 8.

[29] M. Slater, "The weightiest business: marriage in an upper gentry family in 17th-century England," *Past & Present*, 72 (1976), pp. 25-34. Many instances of kin, patronage and marriage connections are available, see for instance the Lister/Belasyse/Fairfax /Tempest/Aske/ Heber linkage documented in D. Farr "Kin, cash, Catholics and Cavaliers: the role of kinship in the financial management of Major-General John Lambert," *Historical Research* 74 (2001), pp. 44-62.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

[31] B. K. Lewalski " Re-writing Patriarchy and Patronage" in *The Yearbook of English Studies* 21 (1991), pp. 88-89.

[32] This breakthrough to female authorship lends support to revisionist studies such as M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*.

[33] D. C. Beaver, *Parish Communities*, p. 50; Rosemary O'Day, *Family and Family Relationships 1500-1900* (New York, 1994), pp. 52-58.

[34] G. J. Schochet, *The Authoritarian Family and Political Attitudes in 17th-Century England: Patriarchalism in Political Thought* (New Brunswick and London, 1988), discusses the connection between the family, household, politics, and the patriarchal system in England as it applied to local and central governments; G. J. Schochet, "Patriarchalism, Politics and Mass Attitudes in Stuart England," *Historical Journal*, 12 (1969), p. 419.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 422.

ideal can be found because the "best hope we have of testing the relationship between prescription and practice in the life and conduct of adult women is through the study...of writings by women themselves which are personal and reflective."[36] It is largely through their conversations, recorded on paper, that we can make our assessments about women and their social, political, and cultural activities.

How did 'Household' function within the patriarchy of seventeenth-century English society? The institution itself was capable of adapting and changing, like the individuals within it, while still existing within the early modern patriarchal system. A useful guide to this is the conduct literature itself. William Gouge in *Of Domesticall Duties* (1622), he argued that relationships within the household were reciprocal and that the obedience owed a husband, father or master was due in return for the performance of certain duties on his part.[37] Also, the relationships within this household were to be regarded as all different with "the relationship between husband and wife [being] critical."[38] The model that they were to follow in the "household' was one of benevolent patriarchy and not one that replicated authoritarian government. Gouge made the husband and wife jointly responsible for the wealth and prosperity of the family even though the responsibilities might differ in detail.[39] Dod and Cleaver *Godly Forme* (1612) explained that just because a wife may be subject to her husband's final authority, this did not mean that she ceased to think.[40] R. Tilney argued that "the office of the woman is, to govern well the household."[41] Other admonishments of Gouge included the suggestion that husbands ought to respect their wives, to appreciate their wives' talents and 'not to exact of their wives, whatsoever wives ought to yield unto if it be exacted'. These limits were necessary because 'the wife is by God's providence appointed a joint governor with the husband of the Family.'[42] It was important to strive for balance and this meant that in theory the husband had to be the head of the house, but he also had to recognize the practical and spiritual importance of the wife. In other words, he could not assume to have too much power.[43] It would seem the conduct book authors were less ideologically rigid than some

[36] A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination*, p. 409.
[37] W. Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties: eight treatises*, 3rd edition (London, 1634), pp. 182-183.
[38] *Ibid.*
[39] W. Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties*, pp. 255-256.
[40] Dod and Cleaver, *Godly Forme*, quoted in S. Amussen, *Ordered Society*, p. 92.
[41] E. Tilney, *Flower of Friendship*, f. ciiiib (v); cf. Dod and Cleaver.
[42] W. Gouge, *Domesticall Duties*, pp. 255-6.
[43] S. Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, p. 47.

scholars who use their works to characterize seventeenth-century society.

When it came to the marriage process, both parents of both parties were involved. However, contrary ideas to this prevail still. Consider this statement: "in a patriarchal society in which the nuclear family structure was the norm [!], the most commonly occurring form of family structure, fathers were decisive figures in the business of daughters' marriages...daughters were relatively passive agents in the marriage process."[44] If one looks at a range of empirical materials, quite the opposite appears to be the case.[45] In addition, what about 'fatherless' women? The previous opinion suggests that those daughters would be rendered paralysed when it came to making decisions. Where there was no father present, studies suggest that is was women who stepped in, not a close male relative.[46] Domestic correspondence suggests that women were the prime instigators and arrangers of marriages whether they were widowed or not. Some scholars give 'widows' a status of their own, and in many cases, rightly so especially if one considers the legal status of these women. Some contend that the widow enjoyed greater autonomy than she had as a maiden or wife. Still, her first responsibility was not to herself but to her children. "Widows who remarried often did so in the hope of securing a 'friend' to represent their interests and those of their children in a male-dominated world."[47] Their negotiations often included property because land was one of the ways that widows were set up to be financially secure. However, this should not mean that women only had authority when they were widowed.[48] It is true that greater consideration was given to property when drawing up marriage contracts, although other components were also considered such as economic resources.[49]

Most families followed the 'injunctions' of the household manuals and developed an

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[44]V. Elliot, "Single Women in the London Marriage Market: Age, Status and Mobility, 1598-1619," in R. B. Outhwaite, ed., *Marriage and Society: Studies in the Social History of Marriage* (London, 1981), p. 89; see D. Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death. Ritual, Religion and the Life Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1999).

[45]Harking back to the 4th c., Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* advocates mothers participating in decisions regarding the education of their children as well as to their marriages (vii. 11-12), S. B. Pomeroy, *Xenophon* Oeconomicus: *a social and historical commentary* (Oxford, 1994),p. 39.

[46]M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*, p. 18.

[47]M. Abbot, *Family Ties*, p. 68.

[48]A. Erickson, "Property and widowhood in England 1660-1840," in S. Cavallo and L. Warner, eds., *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1999); C. Carlton, "The Widow's Tale: Male Myths and Female Reality in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century England," *Albion* 10 (1978); D. Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death. Ritual, Religion and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1997), states approximately twenty-five percent of people marrying in the seventeenth century had been previously married, therefore, widows were a significant demographic group, p. 285.

[49]S. D. Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, p. 73.

economically-functional partnership between husband and wife in which they both served in running of the Household.[50] Succession planning was a component of the economic business of managing family and it was not uncommon for a man to choose his wife as an executor. "In some ways the most intriguing decisions made were made by women with land."[51] Women were far more likely to favour daughters with land rather than their sons. There was no doubt that women saw land as important for their daughters and expected their daughters to be able to profit from it.[52] Within the patriarchal framework, there was much room for manoeuvring. For instance, when it came to preparing wills "women did not just accept the valuation of them offered by the writers of sermon and advice manuals, but shaped their wills according to their experience and perceptions of need [of their children]."[53]

From the empirical material we can see that "the restrictive ideology of sermons and conduct books...it is suggested, contrasts with a more permissive reality in the way that men and women conducted their married lives."[54] Moreover, how was it feasible for women to be at once subordinate and competent as a partner to their husbands? Studies that attempt to explain this particular 'gap' state unequivocally that personality was considered a strong factor in success in running a household effectively. "In gentry circles an effective household manager was a prerequisite for the kind of life many men wished to lead, a life involving much time away from home on social business."[55] Estate stewards could handle the outdoor activities "but a strong woman was needed to deal with the personnel, daily business and financial control of the domestic establishment."[56] So was there actual tension or is that our contemporary misunderstanding? The empirical materials strongly support 'partnership' as the optimal arrangement, complete with compatibility and affection. Couples of the time seem to be able to communicate within the relationship quite successfully even if we have trouble understanding subtleties involved in negotiating through the formal structures. Lady Ann Fanshawe wrote "we never had but one mind throughout out lives, our souls were wrapped up

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[50] *Ibid.*, p. 84.
[51] *Ibid.*, p. 91.
[52] There is some scholarly writing that would support the view that, "women offered a subtle critique of the patriarchal assumptions of the period by giving more authority and power to their daughters than their husbands did,"; *Ibid.* (p. 92); however, I think it depended on the individual family because there is evidence, too, that female relatives could favour male members of the family just as easily as their female relatives.
[53] *Ibid.*, p. 93.
[54] A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination in England*, p. 173.
[55] *Ibid.*, p. 174; for more on women's roles in and around the estate see J. T. Cliffe, *The World of the Country House.*
[56] D. R. Hainsworth, *Stewards, Lords and People*, quote from A Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination*, p. 174.

in each other, our aims and designs one, our love one and our resentments one."[57]

Not surprisingly, each individual relationship depended on the individuals involved and their own family upbringing and continued relationship with that family. Scholars persist in assuming that marriage and family was *fundamentally* different than it is now and they persist in being startled by statements such as "what is striking is the sheer quantity of anecdotal evidence that husbands responded positively to their wives' emotional needs."[58] What is this so surprising? Even though early modern English society was patriarchal, this does not mean that "caring and thoughtfulness" were incompatible with it or displays of affection discouraged. When it came to raising their children, both parents shared in the tasks and all the emotions that went along with child-rearing.[59] The emotional remoteness that is so often assumed to be an essential component of patriarchy is conspicuously absent.[60]

Judith Bennett described marriage as "voluntary egalitarianism shadowed by inequality,"[61] yet it becomes obvious that we "cannot dismiss all the anecdotal evidence of wills, monuments, letters, memoirs and diaries which testifies to many people's happiness in the married state at this time."[62] Or, put another way, if patriarchy was less formally adhered to or less harshness involved in its enforcement, then the better chance of mutual happiness. "The whole success of early modern English patriarchy...lay in its flexibility and its capacity...to sustain modifications, cushioning and mitigation."[63]

One of the ways to demonstrate these active initiatives is to look at the networking capabilities of women in Households. I wish to focus on one specific way that women were active in utilising networks in marriage transactions. Networks of friends and relatives were utilized in arranging successful marriages. The first task was always to find a suitable spouse. In one such arrangement, Lady Jane Cornwallis was helped by Dorothy Randolph to find a match for Cornwallis' son.[64] Men and women worked together to secure good matches, it was truly a *family* [men and women involved] undertaking, albeit not always a smooth one.[65] The

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[57] J. Loftis, *The Memoirs of Anne Lady Halkett and Ann Lady Fanshaw*, p. 103.
[58] *Ibid.*, p. 185.
[59] *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[60] L. Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England.*
[61] J. M. Bennett, "Medieval Women, Modern Women: Across the Great Divide," in D. Aers (ed.), *Culture and History 1350-1600: Essays in English Communities, Identities and Writing* (London, 1992), p. 154.
[62] A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination*, p. 190.
[63] *Ibid.*, p. 191.
[64] *The Private Correspondence of Lady Jane Cornwallis* (London, 1842), pp. 213-14, 217.
[65] See the account of Countess of Huntington, Elizabeth (Stanley) Hastings, her daughter in law and the Dowager Countess of Derby in Huntington lib. MS. HA 4840 cited in M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*, p. 23.

Countess of Huntington wrote to her husband explaining some frustration she was having with her son's future mother-in-law, "I mayd propositions for a fynall conclusion of all matters betwixt her and my sonn; her answer was that shee had other matters to thinke of."[66] Lady Russell was very involved in the lives of her two daughters, both of whom she married into two of the most powerful families in the country (Lord Cavendish, later Earl of Devonshire and Lord Roos, later Duke of Rutland). "Offers came to her rather than to the child's [son] grandfather, Lord Bedford."[67] Lady Russell also took care of her niece, Lady Elizabeth Percy, and along with help from the Dowager Countess of Northumberland, Lady Elizabeth was eventually married to Henry Cavendish, Earl of Ogle. In the negotiation phase it was revealed that the young woman herself had her say in the process: part of the documentation denotes that "no one can contract to marry the child without the grandmother's consent." It is interesting and significant to note that in the agreement, not a single male pronoun was used; it was all referring to women's planning.[68]

Lady Elizabeth Levingstone Delaval wrote extensively in her diary about the involvement of her aunts, grandmother and female cousins in the decisions that formed her life. Lawence Stone saw her example as one of repressive patriarchal marriage manipulations but when we consider all of her diary that we have available to us, we can see that he was selective with his use of material that buttressed his argument.[69] Even though Lady Betty, as she was called at court, wished to marry another man of her choosing, the Earl of Rutland (on the advice of his mother), hurried along divorce proceedings to marry Lady Levingstone. The Earl had decided to involve his mother in the proceedings because she had a friend that could be influential in seeing the match come about because this friend was associated with the man Lady Betty wished to marry. So, in the end, the women worked to bring about the breakup of the young couple, although in the end Lady Betty still did not agree to marry the Earl. Instead, she settled on a Mr. Delaval, a negotiated compromise between herself and her father which involved a financial settlement wherein the father agreed to clear up Lady Betty's past debts from her time at Court. From the examples cited above, it seems quite the normal and acceptable way of doing things to have women and men working cooperatively together to plan

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[66] *Ibid.*
[67] M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*, p. 25.
[68] Lady R. Russell, *Some Account of the Life of ... Lady Russell*, p. 172.
[69] L. Stone, *Family, Sex and Marriage*, pp. 184-185; note this account is in the chapter entitled, "The enforcement of patriarchy."

for the future of the family. Therefore "any model of seventeenth-century domestic patriarchalism that does not take into consideration the power wielded by women in arranging marriages and the existence of what one editor has called a 'recognisable pattern of matriarchy' during the century overlooks an important aspect of women's activities."[70]

"The Good Wife"

The prescriptive conduct literature that deals with social interaction and managing the Household speaks repeatedly about 'the good wife' as an ideal for women to aspire to and there is, too, a male counterpart, 'the good husbandman'.[71] In the descriptions, the wife's labour is distinctively different from her husband's but not less valued in any way. "There is no indication that her functioning in the household is seen as less valuable than her husband's, or that of the domestic realm as being 'inferior' to the world of commerce."[72] Sir Robert Filmer, in *Patriarchia*, like many other conduct authors stresses the womanly virtues and skills that support the family and the household. Men are repeatedly warned against choosing a woman who cannot or will not govern her household. Companionship is part of the expectation. "She shares of their grievances and lessens the burden: shee participates in thy pleasure and augments the joy: in matters of doubt shee is thy counseller; in case of distresse thy comforter: shee is a *co-partner* with thee in al the accidents of life."[73]

It is true that the character of the 'good wife' stresses her duty and devotion to her husband and family, but this does not mean that she is represented as feeble, incapable or servile. "The characterization does not devalue women's work in the domestic sphere, nor does it exclude them on the grounds of incapacity from acting in the public, commercial sphere."[74] Examples are plentiful of how couples divided tasks in Household and how they related to each other in their partnership. Sir Robert Filmer wrote in such a way to extol and value the virtuous wife while stressing the responsibilities of the husband. Mary More, an educated gentlewoman wrote an essay explaining the true rights and duties of women (to state the

[70] M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*, p. 33.
[71] Concerning the distinctions between prescriptive literature and actual behaviour, see P. Bourdieu, *Logic of Practice* (Stanford, 1990).
[72] M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*, p. 38.
[73] W. Heale, *An Apologie for Women* (Oxford, 1609), p. 19; my emphasis.
[74] M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*, p. 41; see chapter five, "Case Studies" for three examples of real life situations in which the prescriptive literature is weighed against the reality of seventeenth-century lives.

obvious, from a woman's perspective).[75] Another author, Robert Whitehall, an unmarried Oxford don living in the Restoration period, penned an essay acknowledging women's intellectual capabilities along secular lines.[76] Thomas Tusser avoided any assertions of women's inferiority that frequently dominate conduct books written for women. Nor does he ever suggest that wives, because they are women, are therefore physically or morally frail.[77] The woman is expected to work as hard as her husband and the efforts of both their labours will bring about order and happiness within the 'Household'. "Take weapon away, of what force is a man? Take housewife from husband, and what is he then?[78]

Sir Robert Filmer was aware of the difference between the authority available in theoretical writings and the reality of applied patriarchalism. "Men", says Mary More "have based their authority over their wives on mistranslations and strained interpretations of key phrases in the New Testament."[79] The evidence suggests we should reconsider historiographical presumptions of marital inequality and move towards ideas that focus on partnership. Related to the couple is of course, their role as parents. Parental power is known as the overarching restraint in a patriarchal system and because, technically, a husband can never take the place of the parents then the wife never owes him the same level of duty as to her mother and father. Whitehall states that, "in spite of this deliberate reduction of women's capabilities [as a result of the misinterpretation of scripture]," one cannot afford to dismiss a woman's authority over her family apart from that of her husband's.[80] This implies that they were a unit and together the authority was shared.

Both men and women challenged, argued and undermined domestic patriarchal authority throughout the seventeenth century.[81] How did the idealized form remain alive then? The answer may lie in the very looseness or adaptability of the structure. Whether her power was acknowledged in theory or practice, the seventeenth-century 'patriarch's' wife wielded considerable power. Some concede this but hurry to assert that this power or authority was

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[75]M. More, "The Woman's Right"; cited in M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's* Wife, p. 151.
[76]R. Whitehall, "The Woman's Right Proved False," in F. Needham (ed.), *A Collection of Poems by Several Hands* Welbeck Miscellany, 2 (1934), pp. 44-45.
[77]T. Tusser, *Points of Housewifery*, foreword by E. V. Lucas (London, 1931).
[78]T. Tusser, preface, *Points of Housewifery*, lines 1-2.
[79]M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's* Wife, p. 151 is the only reference given.
[80]M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*, p. 159.
[81]*Ibid.*, p. 163.

largely displayed in a 'private' realm, not through 'public' institutions.[82] However, I would maintain, supported by common notions of 'the good wife', that women's authority ranged from within the house and out into the broader realm of society. These duties were things that had to be taken care of both in the house and in the wider neighbourhood, hence the entire 'Household'.

Social Networks

Social interaction in a patriarchal society based on privilege and 'ambiguous' definitions of authority meant that all individuals belonged to networks; this was the only way to assert and maintain one's place in society. Seventeenth-century society may impress us largely as a vertically-stratified structure, but we should take note from the source material that there were a greater number of horizontal relationships that functioned for specific reasons. Networks were an inherent and formal part of dealing with others in society, they were deliberate but not altogether static in nature. 'Neighbourliness' described a relationship "based upon residential propinquity, interaction of a regular kind, and a degree of consensus regarding proper conduct among neighbours within local communities."[83] This did not assume, however, that everyone was on an equal ground but they were in a common relationship and 'community of interest'. "The gentry were conscious of a common social identity as 'gentlemen' which outweighed their internal differentiation and political rivalries, that they detected broad groupings among their social inferiors, and that they were conscious of a latent and sometimes open antagonism between their interests and those of the 'rude multitude'."[84]

Networking and social relationships need to be explored at the vitally important local level and then move outward because the "kin beyond the household were more significant that has hitherto been allowed."[85] My key point with kin and family is to highlight who and how they were involved in the Household — specifically how women demonstrated that they were key players and in exactly what way and through what means did they exercise their authority.[86]

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[82] M. Abbot, *Family Ties*, states, "even the staunchest plotters of convention were trapped in dependency [on their male kin]" yet, by contrast states that "the landowner's wife had responsibilities which parallelled her husband's." (pp. 57, 60).

[83] K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, p. 75.

[84] L. Bonfield, R. M. Smith and K. Wrightson (eds.), *The World We Have Gained* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 197; at pp. 197-198 is an interesting discussion on the structure of society.

[85] R. Houston and R. Smith, "A New Approach to Family History?" *History Workshop Journal*, 14 (1982), p. 127.

[86] A. MacFarlane, "History, Anthropology and the Study of History," stated that "no one has really found a way of utilizing the concept [of network] properly" (p. 638) and thus perhaps this can be done through my analysis.

Women "were fully engaged in the social life of their local community, whether this was the round of manor house hospitality" or some other activity such as offering medical aid or helping with the husband's business dealings.[87] 'Job descriptions' demonstrate that there existed no private and public worlds in the community nor clearly gendered differences. Women had authority and responsibility in their local community and the wider kin networks. The 'Household' was where the private and public converged and it was, at the same time, the hub of the social world. As Gouge remarked, "a conscionable performance of household duties, in regard to the end and fruit thereof, may be accounted a public work."[88]

Some scholarship refers to women's associations as 'alliances' implying a deliberate relationship.[89] "Studying the subject of women's alliances"(or, more neutrally, 'networks') "is fundamental not only to the study or women but also to our emerging picture of early modern English society as a whole."[90] To some scholars, it may appear that women's networks seemed to be less formal than their male counterparts, however, this conclusion is largely based on statistical evidence that only counts the frequency in which the networking associations are documented.[91] Men were certainly part of the system of networking and, therefore, in most of the collections of letters and manuscripts there is evidence of men and women participating. Sometimes the network could draw on specific people for specific reasons. For instance, in the case of Lady Elizabeth Ralegh, she called on a number of friends within her circle who had themselves recently been engaged in struggles similar to hers, that is, those dealing with issues and legal questions about inheritance and widowhood. A woman's social connections could serve her in a variety of ways. They affirmed her social place and authority within her network and the local community. Letters themselves could provide a type of 'self-defense' against economic catastrophe; "a letter of complaint implies an ideal structure of hierarchical and economic relations" similar in the way it would today.[92]

Women had a stake in the future of generations and for this reason had a claim to

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[87]A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination*, p. 256.
[88]Cited in P. Crawford, *Women and Religion in England* (New York, 1993), pp. 49-50.
[89]S. Frye and K. Robertson (eds.), *Maids and Mistresses*, p. vii.
[90]*Ibid.*, p. viii.
[91]K. Robertson, "Tracing Women's Connections from a Letter by Elizabeth Ralegh," in S. Frye and K. Robertson, *Maids and Mistresses*, p. 149.
[92]K. Robertson, "Letter by Elizabeth Ralegh," p. 150.

power that was often mobilized through their family and kin networks.[93] And although the system favoured the legal operations of primogeniture and inheritance through the male lineage, women formed active and cooperative means to deal with the system. When the men of the family were imprisoned, or otherwise restricted in their ability to deal one-on-one with friend or foe, it was the women who could move about and invoke the connections necessary to ensure an acceptable outcome to any crisis. One example of this can be found in the letters exchanged between Sir Walter Raleigh and his wife, Elizabeth. Sir Walter, feeling isolated and abandoned, wrote to his wife in 1603, "to what friend to direct thee I know not, for all mine have left mee in the true tyme of triall."[94] He required his wife to use her network to deal with his requests for petitioning and pardon, especially regarding his estate at Sherborne which had been leased from Elizabeth I and granted in perpetuity in 1599. It was Lady Ralegh (this is how she spells her name in her signatures), who embarked on a letter-writing campaign to Sir Robert Cecil which was, in the end, unsuccessful. A clerical error came into play and the estate was forfeited to the King, who granted it to a favourite, Robert Carr. She had called on the help of nineteen other women (who all endorsed the letter) in her efforts.[95] "Tracing women [cuts] across the grain of the historical record. Mothers' names are not always recorded in parish baptismal registers; the most common social phenomena, such as women exchanging their family name upon marriage — every marriage — create enormous obstacles for the historian."[96]

Kinship was a flexible category that went far beyond the bounds of consanguinity. 'Cousin' could mean someone not solely related through blood but also by linkages through successive marriages and step-families. The one important thing to note is that the relationship was equally recognized whether it came through the maternal or paternal relations. Family networks functioned for relatively minor reasons (naming a child), or for more important matters (patronage and property matters). It is evident that "women did offer other women

[93]K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, pp. 82-86 discusses the significance of kinship in English society and quotes Professor Clancy, "the most fundamental of all bonds in medieval society was that of mutual obligation," and points out that these bonds continued through the early modern period (p. 85).
[94]E. Edwards, *The Life of Sir Walter Raleigh*, vol. 2 (London, 1868), p. 285.
[95]These included Ladies from substantial families: Raleigh, Saltingstone, Woodroffe, Bronker, Pawlett, St Leger, Killegrew, Kingsmell, Cornwallis, Oxenbridg, Throgmorton, Walssh, Sydley, Herbert, Blanch, Marin, Cheek, Trafford, Goring; taken from E. Edwards, *Life*, vol. 2, p. 400). The names may be hard to connect to the male line and this is because when tracing the bilateral kinship system of England, the "recognition of the kin links of women is difficult because their marks on the record are not only less frequent but are often ambiguous" (p. 156), the name changes after each marriage.
[96]A. Erickson, *Women & Property*, p. 18.

support in property struggles."[97] The kinship-networking system was one "of interdependence and mutual obligation which, however dormant or latent for much of the time, could be activated by relatives when needed. Participants understood the system in terms of possibilities, resources and obligations."[98]

Networks were an extremely complex social arrangement. How they functioned is difficult to uncover in easily defined explanations. Sometimes they even functioned through small groupings such as sewing groups.[99] Similar in form to how manuscripts circulated through different circles of family and friends, so too did fabrics and needlework. There were many discussions and resultant stitches of myth and symbolism which spoke of women's authority and representation in everyday life. Linen, spoken of as a commodity, is frequently mentioned in womens' wills. Often the linen was described in intricate detail and individually named pieces were passed down through the female line. Whereas males tended to pass on property to their sons, women had other valuable bequests to be made. Although the 'holdings' are not the same, they are equally important for the family inheritance patterns.[100] "This constant acquisition of skills and patterns across generations and within groups of associated women necessitated women's interconnections through and within the textiles hanging on the beds and walls of fathers, brothers and husbands."[101] Children's clothing was another 'commodity' that was regularly exchanged between women within their networks.[102] All of these items ties in with gift-giving practices. "Interpersonal dependence is everywhere the result of socially constructed ties between human agents", so that "the contents of those ties are defined by the participant's reciprocal expectations. It is these reciprocal expectations between persons that make social interaction possible, both in market exchange and gift exchange."[103]

[97] An example would be Lady Anne Clifford"s ongoing battles to reclaim her father's property. She received support from her maternal kinship line and advice from Queen Anne; V. Sackville-West (ed.), *The Diary of Lady Anne Clifford* (London, 1923), p. 48, entry for January 1617.

[98] D. Cressy, "Kinship in Early Modern England," *Past and Present*, 113 (1986), p. 47.

[99] See S. Frye, "Sewing Connections: Elizabeth Tudor, Mary Stuart, Elizabeth Talbot and Seventeenth Century Anonymous Needleworkers," in S. Frye and K. Robertson, *Maids and Mistresses*, chap.10 which discusses how material objects can provide the means to recover networks-alliances of early modern women.

[100] S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, "sometimes a pattern of female inheritance networks stretching through several generations can be discerned from the wills of ordinary women," (p. 221) as in the case of Dorothy Fletcher who bequeathed her goods to her daughter Bridget : the feather bed, the bolster to it and a rug to her granddaughter.

[101] S. Frye, "Sewing Connections," p. 177.

[102] For a full range of interior home items that might be exchanged see P. Thornton, *Seventeenth-Century Interior Decoration* (New Haven, 1978).

[103] D. Cheal, *The Gift Economy* (London, 1988), p. 11. See too, M. Mauss, *The Gift*, trans. W. D. Halls (New York, 1990) which points out the importance of reciprocity, self-interest and paying attention to the gift itself; F. Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1990).

There is some scholarship that explains the closeness of these female alliances in unique ways. I think it is valuable, if not essential to remember that even though it may seem that there is a strong 'female' component to the network, there are 'males' involved albeit not directly visible (for example, through marriage and thus in-law relationships). When discussing network relationships no one half of the equation nor component part of the context can afford to be excluded. "To understand fully how women were social agents in the early modern period, and the limits of their agency, it is necessary to take account of the complicated economic and social structures in which they functioned."[104] One interesting example of the intricacies of men and women and their relationships comes from Sir John Statham. Ironically, this man described his Derbyshire estate (which came to him through his wife's family) as a symbol of the landed gentleman's independence, a display of his power to command men and resources, and generosity.[105]

One area that must be addressed in this chapter is that of women's writing. There are copious sources that deal with this topic and how it relates to women's identity and agency and function within society.[106] Female writing evokes various sentiments and conclusions about its value. "Writing itself was a disreputable cultural activity for women, deplored by humanists and religious leaders as leading to temptation or, worse, lasciviousness."[107] It was especially poetry that traversed the private and the public, the male and female because "as poetry passed from hand to hand among a group of friends and acquaintances, both women and men wrote poems in response to others' work."[108] Poetry had the potential to contain works from almost any form of genre: riddles, translations, epigrams, and formal poetry.

One woman writer, Lady Damaris Masham (wife and the earliest known biographer of John Locke) was not silenced by her critics but "was inextricably bound to powerful men in her

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[104] S. Frye and K. Robertson, *Maids and Mistresses*, pp. 308-9.

[105] M. Abbot, *Family Ties*, p. 39.

[106] A good survey can be found in, D. R. Woolf, "A Feminine Past? Gender, Genre, and Historical Knowledge in England, 1500-1800," *American Historical Review* 102 (1997), pp. 645-679; K. U. Henderson and B. F. McManus, *Half Humankind: contexts and texts of the controversy in England, 1540-1640* (Chicago, 1985); for another empirical example see, M. E. Lamb, "The Agency of the Split Subject: Lady Anne Clifford and the Uses of Reading," *English Literary Renaissance*, 22 (1992), pp. 347-368.

[107] B. Smith and U. Applet, *Write or Be Written: Early Modern Women Poets and Cultural Constraints* (Aldershot, 2001), p. xi.

[108] *Ibid.*, p. 31;'miscellanies' circulated between these worlds too. See also, C. Barash, *English Women's Poetry 1649-1714: politics, community and linguistic authority* (Oxford, 1999); M. Prior, "Conjugal love and the flight from marriage: poetry as a source for the history of women and the family," in V. Fildes (ed.), *Women as Mothers in Pre-Industrial England* (London, 1990).

life, acting as their mirror and defender, but not granted a voice of her own."[109] She was dependent on a "female network of family and friends to provide her access to London and to provide an alternative mode of living to that in Cambridge."[110]Lady Damaris believed in a dual existence of family domesticity and writing: "do not then think that the Spirit of Care, and Familie Affairs shall Interely Possess me *how* deepe soever I may seeme to Have ingag'd my self in them" she writes in the first year of marriage to Locke.[111] Married and living in the country she writes "I shall have a Great deal of Real Business, and Where if I had none I must However seeme Busie to Acquire the Necessarie Reputation of a Good Countrey Houswife"[112] She writes her letters in an acceptable form, verse, and does not apologize for this. Furthermore, she writes in a self-conscious analysis of women's relationships and the construction of socially defined categories of what constitutes women's duty and happiness.

Poetry, along with other forms of writing typically utilized by both men and women revealed a great deal about the individual and the setting in which they lived. "In seventeenth-century poetry, nature and architecture are never politically neutral spaces."[113] As seen in the previous chapter the country house is presented as a political or moral microcosm and one has to ask just how significant is gender to the issue of writing? Nature is traditionally gendered as feminine, hence the tie of the female with the country, garden, and estate.[114] It is true that to seventeenth century men and women's eyes, "images of ideal order and authority, then, are founded on the female body which also paradoxically symbolizes the most potent threats to that order."[115] Much of the reading of Mary Sidney's poems will challenge what has come to be the accepted critical view about writing by women that women's writing is focussed on issues of or presentation of the 'private' or the internal while men's is oriented toward 'public' subjects and audiences.[116]

Writing did give women a voice: that cannot be denied. Dorothy Leigh, author of *The Mother's Blessing: or, The Godly Counsel of a Gentlewoman not long since deceased, left behind for her children...* (1616, last edition, 1674), used her voice to articulate a moral exhortation to women

[109]M. Ezell, "Household Affaires Are the Opium of the Soul?", p. 49.
[110]*Ibid.*, p.55.
[111]Published in E. S. deBeer (ed.), *The Correspondence of John Locke* (Oxford, 1978), vol. 2, p. 727.
[112]*Ibid.*, (2:737).
[113]J. Pearson, "An Emblem of Themselves, in Plum or Pear: The Female Body and the Country House," B. Smith and U. Appelt, *Write or be Written*, p. 88.
[114]*Ibid.*, p. 88.
[115]*Ibid.*, p. 89; think of the story of Eve and Adam where it is the female who is given the responsibility for the Fall.
[116]B. Smith and U. Applet, *Write or be Written*, pp. 155-175 discusses these poems.

in the period. The book appears as a series of sermons intended to instruct her children on 'right living'. Thus, she involves herself in the domain of religion and theology, a domain that some might see as exclusively 'male'.[117] However, upon closer reading the instructions to her sons, along with her direct addresses to women in the passages, indicate that she is actually speaking to a female audience. She talks about how the husband should take care of his wife as a "companion and fellow," not make of her both "a servant and drudge."[118] She attempts to establish a positive position of women in a dominantly male world primarily through her association with Mary, mother of Christ. Leigh successfully argues for the dignity and capability of women; in other words, she ascribes them agency and refutes the notion of any weakness or need for subordination in their relationships with their husbands.

Looking at the volatile dynamics in the Barrett-Lennard family will allow us to "understand power in action rather than in concept and [may] lead to a rethinking of patriarchy."[119] When it comes to understanding networks and family-kin groupings we need to keep in mind that these relationships were not static but dynamic.[120] Thinking about the patriarchal system sometimes infers just the relationship between the husband and wife but when discussing networks within a patriarchal system, it is important to include the wider family, such as the relationships between siblings and their parents. Perhaps women made vows to their husbands to obey them but no such vows were typically made by other family members or friends.[121] Nor can we assume that everyone shared the definition of the word 'obey' in the same way. Moreover, women in early modern society had "limited subordination", that is, they were too vital to the maintenance of daily life to be completely dominated.[122]

Some scholars refer to the patriarchal system as "shifting" or "ambiguous," in an effort

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[117] J. L. Klein (ed.), *Daughters, Wives & Widows*, p. 288; E. Joscelin, *The Mother's Legacy to her Unborn Childe* (1624), Elizabeth ventures into a similar domain wherein she adopts a moralizing tone, based on scripture, in her instructions. This seems to be a common form of discourse and thus leads me to believe that it was not exclusively a 'male' domain or form of writing.

[118] No reference is given regarding this manuscript; quote taken from J. Klein, *Daughters, Wives & Widows*, p. 289.

[119] L. A. Pollock, "Rethinking Patriarchy," p. 5.

[120] Men had concerns when it came to bridging the gap between prescriptive literature and actual practice in their Households, as well as what shape the system might take in future generations. See A. Fletcher, "Men's Dilemma: The Future of Patriarchy in England 1560-1660," *TRHS.*, 6th series, 4 (1994), pp. 61-81.

[121] A. Shepard, "Henry Howard and the lawfull regiment of women," *History of Political Thought*, 12 (1991), pp. 589-603 discusses how Howard did not challenge the ideal of patriarchy in general but his defense of women's right to exercise power shows that, "the ideological dominance of patriarchy was not as total as total as has been generally assumed" (p. 602).

[122] S. Amussen, "The Gendering of Popular Culture in Early Modern England," in T. Harris (ed.), *Popular Culture in England c. 1500-1800* (New York, 1995), p. 51. For a discussion of the boundaries surrounding the exercise of dominance within a marriage see, A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination*, pp. 358-9.

to explain the relationships of all those participating within it.[123] "The [technical] head of the household could never have patriarchal power completely since even in the moment of possessions, it remains in essence an entity in transition, something to be passed on to the heir."[124] The patriarch, or patriarchal couple, had to be careful to run the Household with an air of authority but at the same time be open and sensitive to pressures from within that might threaten the framework. Any one person had to keep all their relationships in balance and herein lay the potential conflict. "In every sphere of life moral obligations could conflict and circumstances alter cases."[125] In one family, the sisters bound together in a pact against their father by mutually promising each other their inheritance.[126] Other occasions for ruptures within the family are well documented over the century and display the features common to a patronage system wherein gratitude featured as an essential component.[127] The 'system' worked with parents and siblings and extended family members, all of these people could be "at one and the same time allies and rivals, repositories of trust and provokers of suspicion, potentially helpful and potentially destructive," regardless of gender.[128] Women were an integral part of the networks exchanges that were in turn an integral part of early modern society. In the case of Dacre Barrett-Lennard, he implored his sister Anne to help him persuade their father to accept the choice of a wife that Dacre had preferred. Financial compensation was part of the bargain between the siblings, the intended bride would provide a cash portion for the sisters rather than one charged on an estate. Anne, in alliance with her grandmother, Lady North, proposed the match to her father and stated ironically that it was "a buisnesse on wch my brother's future good fortune does absolutely depend."[129]

Clearly, the patriarchal system on which networks and alliances were founded was one in which all participants had the ability to make work for or against them. "Individuals

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[123]F. Nolan, *Dangerous Familiars, Representations of Domestic Crime in England, 1550-1700* (London, 1994), p. 28.
[124]L. Pollock, "Rethinking Patriarchy," p. 5.
[125]K. Thomas, "Cases of Conscience in Seventeenth-Century England," in J. Morrill, P. Slack and D. Woolf (eds.), *Public Duty*, p. 30.
[126]T. Barrett-Lennard, *An Account of the Families of Lennard and Barrett, Compiled Largely from Original Documents* (1908), p. 476. Later, around 1682, the siblings were rivalling for their father's good will concerning an estate and properties that had come to the family through the mother's line. The protracted squabbling demonstrates the agency that both brother and sisters had in the financial negotiations.
[127]A breach occurred between sisters, Anne and Dorothy, and brother, Dacre over the inheritance upon their father's death. In the end, the will stood and Anne and Dorothy received their intended share. Yet, two years after the court order Anne and Dacre were fighting over the furniture at Belhus and one of the estates, Barrett-Lennard, *Families of Lennard and Barrett*, pp. 526, 528, 537.
[128]L. Pollock, "Rethinking Patriarchy," p. 16.
[129]Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 17.

estimated the consequences of their actions for their future welfare and in practice chose how much deference to accord."[130] Each individual weighed their actions against the effect it would have on the entire network of interactions. Furthermore, it was within the broader concept of 'Household' where family and friend networks found themselves operating. Alliances were based on relationships and those were regularly being "formed, dissolved and reconstituted. Relationships between and among family and friends were not stagnant and were not uniform."[131]

The patriarchal nature of early modern society had an adaptive element embedded within its framework that allowed for the modification of its orderly rules. The adjustments were undertaken through a series of connected relationships that formed an individual's network or alliance. Any given set of families and friends had the ability to survive and even to thrive because they were held together by bonds, needs, and codes. What may appear on the outside, for example, the rigid nature of patriarchal systems, was not necessarily the reality of life inside the 'Household'. Patriarchy may be defined as the "institutionalised male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of that subordination to women in society in general," however, this definition puts too much emphasis on the static nature of behaviour and the impassivity of women.[132] Individuals priorized their actions and submission could not be guaranteed. In many instances cited above, it was conspicuous by its absence. Reducing it to an issue of gender crises does not make the understanding of patriarchy complete.[133] Rather, men and women alike exercised agency and thus mitigated the rigidity of the structure through individual actions.

Individual relationships are notoriously complex and especially in early modern society it is clear that the patriarchal system was simultaneously one of flexibility and limitation. When it comes to dealing with networks and the individual variances that come into play within them, "the tendency [to understand the nature of social relations] has been to borrow models ready-made from other historical periods, from the historiography of other countries (notably France), or from the theoretical stock-in-trade of sociology, and to impose them in an

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[130] *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[131] L. Pollock, "Rethinking Patriarchy," p. 20.
[132] A. Fletcher, "Mens' Dilemma," and elaborated in his *Gender, Sex & Subordination.*
[133] In addition to *Ibid.*, pp. 62, 68-69 see D. Underdown, "The Taming of the Scold," M. Ingram, "Scolding Women Cucked or Washed: A Crisis of Gender Relations in Early Modern England?" in G. Walker and J. Kermode (eds.), *Crime and the Courts in Early Modern England* (London, 1994), pp. 48-80; A. Bray, "To Be a Man in Early Modern Society. The Curious Case of Michael Wigglesworth," *History Workshop Journal*, 41 (1996), pp.155-66.

essentially assertive manner."[134] Critical to understanding individuals, their personalities and how their behaviour affected everyday life, is the need to be able to analyse and understand the nuances that went along with relating to each other. "Patronage and clientage, paternalism and deference, should never be abstracted from the essential context of the realities of power in society."[135] It is essential to remember that "historical narrative is ultimately the concretation of individual life stories."[136]

[134] K. Wrightson, *World we have gained*, p. 192.
[135] *Ibid.*, p.193.
[136] S. Mendelson, *Mental World*, p. 11.

Chapter Five — *The Formation, Representation, and Presentation of the Self*

> *Have therefore ever more care, that thou be belived of thy Wife, rather than thy self besotted on her; and thou shalt judge of her love by these two observations: first If thou perceive she have a care of thy estate, and exercise her self therein; the other, If she has duty to please thee, and be sweet unto thee in conversation, her have equal part of thy Estate whilest thou livest, if thou find her sparing and honest.*[1]

Sir Walter Raleigh points to qualities a wife should possess and be consciously capable of 'displaying' to others. This chapter looks at how gentlewomen consciously defined themselves and, in so doing, 'constructed' their identity in the Household. This necessarily involves looking at their behaviour, or their 'performance' in relationships to see how interaction shaped their identity by using a variety of social resources that they deployed with deliberate action.[2] How was the self-image formed and what social resources were available to reinforce these constructions? How can we understand the complex considerations of creating identity and interrelating it to social image?[3] Seventeenth-century society, its individuals and institutions, its values and practices, were in some ways static but in others there existed an opportunity for adaptability and it is evident that gentlewomen utilized them to their advantage.[4] The available resources that will be discussed in this chapter include the law, visual representation and attributes of 'self' performance.

While Household can be viewed as the main 'theatre' in which everyday actions and events were performed, it was through cultural resources and the interactions of individuals that the 'self' was constituted. Rules of behaviour in conduct books should be viewed as cultural resources because the individual actor does display agency in response to the moral rules that are impressed upon him or her from without.[5] Quite apart form whether early modern theorists were motivated by an "unspoken (perhaps indeed unconscious) desire to oppress women and so

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[1] Sir W. Raleigh, *Remains of Sir Walter Raleigh* (London, 1675), p. 85.

[2] E. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self*, defines interaction as "the reciprocal influence of individuals upon one another's actions when in one another's immediate physical presence;" performance is "all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants" (p.15).

[3] *Ibid.* Understanding how structure and agency function to define social roles is critical to understanding the intricacy of identity formation, "a social role will involve one or more parts and that each of these different parts may be presented by the performer on a series of occasions to the same kinds of audience or to an audience of the same persons" (p.16).

[4] For an example of 'adaptability' see, A. Kugler, "Constructing Wifely Identity: Prescription and Practice in the Life of Lady Sarah Cowper," *Journal of British Studies*, 40 (2001); "she challenged yet worked within a cultural system that defined her and simultaneously offered strategies of resistance" (p. 323).

[5] E. Goffman, "On Face-Work: An Analysis of Ritual Elements in Social Interaction," *Interaction Ritual* (New York, 1967), p. 45.

were incoherent or even hypocritical in their theoretical treatment of them",[6] the ubiquitous presence of such resources plausibly shaped actual behaviours, however indirectly, because they helped shape expectations and the degree of choice that was available to them. Pondering the intentions of authors is one way of assessing the gap between the 'ideal' and the 'reality' of everyday practice. Another way is to explain behaviour that operates contrary to the 'rules' as deviant or subversive. Rules in any given society function as part of how social identity is constructed and show agency within that society by observing individuals either following or breaking the rules.[7] Concerning the authority and agency of women, some of these writers articulate the explanations as common sense truisms: women were 'naturally' subject but not all females were subject to males.[8] This means that patriarchy in its purest form did not translate into practice: men did not 'control' women. "It stretches credibility to imagine that wives were simply passive enactors of their husbands' directions or mute spectators of decisions affecting the well-being of their families...it is certainly apparent that wives had a part to play in some of the most significant — and therefore most often recorded — decisions of the family cycle.[9]

Even though the law may appear to be biassed in favour of men, day to day legal practices supported many women's claims. Interestingly, it was common for theorists to defend a daughter's right to inherit. Female rights were recognized in civil law whereby the dowry given to a daughter at marriage was seen as her share of the *family* estate.[10] Issues surrounding property law concerned family posterity and protection more than male versus female ownership. The law contained some built-in supports for women, such as allowing the legal device of the 'trust' to mean that a woman could control estates independently of their husbands.[11] *De facto,* women's property rights "varied in accordance with the provisions of different systems of law, their place

[6]M. R. Sommerville, *Sex and Subjection: Attitudes to Women in Early-Modern Society* (London, 1995), p. 4; L. J. Nicholson, *Gender and History* (New York, 1986); C. Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford, 1988); S. Greenblatt, "Fact or Fiction," *Shakespearean Negotiations* (Oxford, 1988).

[7]E. Goffman, *Interaction Ritual,* p. 90; M. Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in P. Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader* (New York, 1984), pp. 85-86.

[8]"No one thought Elizabeth I was subject to her stable-boy. Wives were subject to husbands and daughters to fathers, but mothers were not subject to sons - on the contrary, they possessed authority over them," M. R. Sommerville, *Sex and Subjection,* p. 51.

[9]K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities,* p. 65.

[10]M. R. Sommerville, *op cit* , p. 55; see pp. 97-105 for a fuller explanation of women's rights under the law. See also, T. E. Tomlins (ed.), Sir Thomas Littleton, *Lyttleton, his treatise of tenures* (New York, 1978); outside of the scriptures, common law is the most ubiquitous form of conduct literature when it comes to issues about women and legal rights.

[11]A. L. Erickson, *Women & Property* covers this subject thoroughly; M. Sommerville, *Sex and Subjection,* p. 98; L. Bonfield, *Marriage Settlements, 1601- 1740: the adoption of the strict settlement* (Cambridge, 1983); L. Bonfield (ed.), *Marriage, Property and Succession* (Berlin, 1992).

of residence and their access to legal assistance."[12] This variance according to preexisting conditions is linked to social ranking, which in turn was linked to behaviour. Women, like men, were expected to behave in accordance to their social station.[13] The roles attached to that station were usually associated with a particular 'front' or 'mask' that had become institutionalized in a sort of 'collective representation' of the stereotyped expectations.[14]

Despite near universal convictions that concede the female sex was inferior as a sex (biologically), that did not exclude women from all positions of authority whether over males or females. In the Bible, conduct books, classical texts and legal courts the Household was designated as the place where women rightly exercised her authority. A woman's 'proper' domain was Household management and she was believed to hold the power to rule it by both natural and divine law. Evidence of female authority then is found in everyday 'normal' experience as well as in the prescriptive declarations. Indeed, "women's work within the Household — as diligent and honest housewives — was central to the construction of a code of feminine honour."[15] The power of the wife was delegated and reinforced by scripture ('the ordinance of God') and through other literary resources. "Who appointed that the wife next under the husband should bear the chiefest sway in the administration of the family."[16] Female authority in the household was supported by Christian and Classical traditions and was central to the formation of her identity. Husband and wife were to support the others' equal power and authority; it was a relationship of cooperation, not competition. Marriage was believed to be a community of Goods that were to be co-owned and shared. It is therefore not simply that a man 'owned' everything unto himself. "Ascriptions of authority — whether individual, communal, or mediated through the household or the law — constituted a cornerstone of honour, for *women* as for men."[17] In seventeenth-century society, the word 'subjection' incorporated distinctions between conjugal, political, filial and servile subjection, crucial distinctions for our comprehensive

[12]K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, pp. 43-44.

[13]F. Whigham, *Ambition & Privilege: the social tropes of Elizabethan courtesy literature* (Berkeley, 1984), p. 163; S. W. Hull, *Chaste, Silent & Obedient: English Books for Women 1475-1640* (San Marino, 1982), p. 18. "Order, rank or degree in early modern society indicated status deriving from a whole complex of qualities including family standing, gender, kinship ties, political connection and place in the community, property and how it was possessed, as well as conspicuous display and consumption as a function of wealth," N. Weale, *Writing and Society: Literacy, print and politics in Britain 1590-1660* (London, 1999), p. 20.

[14]E. Goffman, *Presentation of the Self*, p. 27.

[15]G. Walker, "Expanding the Boundaries of Female Honour in Early Modern England," *TRHS, 6th series* (1996), p. 245; see also K. Wrightson, *op cit.* pp. 44-49 for a description of duties and significance of same for women, especially with respect to their economic contributions.

[16]M. R. Sommerville, *Sex and Subjection*, p. 68; no specific reference given.

[17]G. Walker, "Expanding the Boundaries," p. 245, emphasis mine.

understanding of roles and behaviours. Everyone was 'subject' to someone so that implies that fine distinctions mattered. The husband and wife worked together for a common end in the Household even though technically the wife was 'subject' to her husband. Xenophon, a classical writer, described the model of the Household where a wife who has learned her lessons well can exercise authority over her husband, *if* he delegates it to her as he is encouraged to do so. The husband may have controlled the family property but the wife had rights to use both his and her contributions to their joint holding.[18] Because of her actual authority and position, "no early modern theorist could quite bring himself to say that a wife was her husband's equal," but many argued that she came close to being so.[19] Just because a woman was married did not mean she had to "be put upon any base drudgeries, which are contrary to [her] birth, dignity, or circumstances."[20]

The early modern Household was different from any understanding or conception that we have in our contemporary society.[21] This may seem to be a redundant remark at this stage of the analysis, but I contend a necessary one in order to remind us of how we need to be conceptualizing the subject matter in a different way. Key to the study of Household is the partnership that existed between husbands and wives. The marital relationship was viewed from earliest times as fundamental to the success of an *oikos*, that is an 'estate', 'household' or 'family'.[22] The partnership necessitated joint participation in the guidance of the domestic economy and for the wife, this "was a source of independent identity, confidence, and self-esteem [...] which could be robustly expressed in word and deed. The strategies which governed the household economy were hers too."[23]

The 'competition' myths seem to be self-perpetuating in some cases and it seems as though one cannot get away from the 'battle' theme. "The misogynist tradition in literature [or history!] is a long one, the battle of the sexes an eternally popular theme."[24] The seventeenth-

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[18]M. Sommerville, *Sex & Subjection*, p. 104. K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, states that Xenophon is more cited than Aristotle in early modern literature.

[19]Thus, "a wife's property rights were submerged, not annihilated," K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, p. 83.

[20]W. Nicholls, *The duty of inferiours towards their superiours* (London, 1701), p. 94.

[21]P. Laslett, *Family life and illicit love in earlier generations* (Cambridge, 1977), p. 60ff. ; R. A. Houlbrooke, *The English Family: 1450-1700* (London, 1984), p. 18.

[22]In Xenophon's, *Oeconomicus*, the translation of the word may appear to emphasize property while ignoring affective relationships, however, this is only a problem because of our contemporary bias; see S. B. Pomeroy, *Xenophon*, p. 31; L. Strauss, *Xenophon's Socratic Discourse: an interpretation of the* Oeconomicus (Ithaca, 1970), pp. 92-99 covers the definition of household management.

[23]K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, p. 65.

[24]D. E. Underdown, "The Taming of the Scold," p. 117.

century Household made no distinction between private and public spheres, one of the most common arguments for the 'battle'. So then, if this division did not even exist, then there exists no foundation on which to continue the 'battle' between men and women over space and separate worlds.[25] Hence, the two spheres argument exists without any empirical basis. Classical influences state that both men and women have complementary roles and they support each other's respective aptitudes and distinct gender-roles. This is not to subordinate individual differences; men and women alike have the capacity to exercise memory, diligence, moderation, and discretion, all crucial to the successful management of household and the individual themselves.[26]

Not only was the Household different in the seventeenth-century but so was the society and the cultural realm that encapsulated them. The Household institutional system may be understood as "a routine way of exercising power and authority" for men and women.[27] These divisions of 'private and public', subtle ones if at all, should be understood as fluid and relative, in need of constant negotiation. It was the Household which functioned as the site where these negotiations occurred and it was the actual relationships that existed within and resonated into broader social networks that manifest decisions by husbands and wives.[28] And, it was the male *and* female members of the Household that furthered the interests of the family in the public social, political and economic world.[29] Moreover, "throughout society, the central characteristic of the gender division of labour was the flexibility and adaptability of the female role," thereby making female identity similarly flexible and adaptable.[30] This meant that female agency and identity was contingent on a fluid institutional structure, the Household. Managing oneself and one's household involved a number of tasks such as managing servants, clothing, children, finances and social engagements.[31] Frequently, women had to exercise these duties of hospitality

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[25]J. B. Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman. Women in Social and Political Thought* (Princeton, 1981), p. 103.

[26]S. B. Pomeroy, *Xenophon* Oeconomicus, p. 37. Xenophon is more similar to Plato than to Aristotle in regard to his views on the equality of women. Xenophon and Plato are both interested in educating men and women for leadership, thereby placing the emphasis on inner qualities and the need for performance management of oneself, p. 38.

[27]L. Pollock, "Concept of Privacy" p. 81; also see A. Maçzak, "From aristocratic household to princely court. Restructuring patronage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries," in R. G. Asch and A. M. Birke, *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age c 1450-1650* (London, 1991), pp. 315-27.

[28]S. Coontz, *Social Origins of Private Life, A History of American Families 1600-1900* (London, 1988), p. 1.

[29]L. Pollock, "Concept of Privacy," p. 84.

[30]K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, p. 48.

[31]S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, "Women's work always included responsibility for a household and, if they were mothers, the care or supervision of children," (p. 300) whether they were from the poor, middling or upper ranks.

and sociability in London as well as in the counties.[32] Hospitality, one of the important tasks that men and women engaged in as performative roles, highlights the need for practicality and, at the same time, the need to make a statement about identity and character as an outcome of doing the task.[33] Hospitality was both a very visible performance and also means of tangibly measuring managerial success.[34] As long as honour and reputation were determined by how one acted within the Household, it was wise to use it as a 'stage' on which to display one's virtues.[35] Advice and conduct books discuss household duties of gentle society as preoccupied with the behaviour of the individual and with his [or her] role in polite society.[36] Gentlewomen were active agents in asserting their place and defining their role within the Household. Their perspective on marriage, as with other relationships, show that "their aim was not so much to escape 'due subjection' as to preserve self-respect, [and] to avert moral and social disgrace."[37] Behaviour and one's control over it involved active management. The performance did not just happen; the 'actor' had to create an impression of legitimacy through their interactions with others. To 'be' someone meant that you had to not only "possess the required attributes, but also sustain the standards of conduct and appearance that one's social grouping attaches thereto."[38]

Visual Resources and Performances

The people of early modern England were 'public' people and they inhabited a world where their activities and representations of such were the object of ongoing scrutiny by their

[32]A good example of this is traced through generations of one family, S. E. Whyman, *Sociability and Power in late-Stuart England: the cultural worlds of the Verneys, 1660-1720* (Oxford, 1999). Negotiating the boundaries of the complex components which defined feminine virtue, and hence, part of identity then was an ongoing activity for women in the household. Jane, "as the wife of a natural philosopher, Dr. John Dee, often had to deny or challenge contemporary notions of feminine virtue in order to support her husband's professional aspirations," D. Harkness, "Managing an Experimental Household: The Dees of Mortlake and the Practice of Natural Philosophy," *Isis* 88 (1997), p. 251. My thanks to Dr. L. Cormack for bringing this reference to my attention.

[33]F. Heal, "The Idea of Hospitality in Early Modern England," *Past & Present* 102 (1984), pp. 66-93 is one of the earliest studies on hospitality and its significance. Hospitality was undertaken as a dutiful response to scripture and classical teaching, specifically as a means to provide for the poor. In addition, hospitable behaviour functioned as a way to strengthen communal values and so in this way incorporated the broader concept of Household that I have suggested in this thesis. It was closely connected to concepts of gentry honour as well; see M. E. James, *Society, Politics, and Culture: studies in early modern England* (Cambridge, 1986).

[34]D. Harkness, "Managing an Experimental Household," p. 252.

[35]F. Heal, *Hospitality*, p. 23.

[36]W. Ramesey, *The Gentleman's Companion* (London, 1672), R. Allestree, *The Gentleman's Calling* (London, 1696), E. Leigh, *The Gentleman's Guide* (London, 1680). For gentlewomen, many a discussion is found within their collections of letters or 'advice' books to children about behaviour with specific references to character attributes.

[37]S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, pp. 136-7.

[38]E. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self*, p. 75.

friends, family and neighbours.[39] 'Appearances mattered' and a certain standard of behaviour was to be maintained in all behaviour. The 'appearance' went beyond the imagery of trying to 'put one's best foot forward'. In order to keep family discord from becoming public knowledge — one could engage in a number of positive behaviours that would serve as a means to *construct* an image.[40] It was in these representative 'roles' or constructs "that we know each other; it is in these roles that we know ourselves."[41] One of the most obvious forms of this type of construction is found in visual representation, both in its possession and representation. "Gentlewomen *cultivated* an interest in a wide range of aesthetic objects, including jewellery, paintings and furniture, books, and musical instruments, and even landscaping and architecture."[42] Looking at how visual imagery incorporates all these interests, helps us to search out and analyse the allocation of roles and identities of men and women. It highlights the similarities and differences between the genders and that, in turn, leads to a better understanding of agents' choices of appropriations, public expectations, and thus, of the system of social values as a whole.[43] Artistic codes and conventions have always represented cultural categories, political ideas and power relations. Furthermore, looking at visual images makes it possible to scrutinize the ways in which people were seen as subjects and individuals, each one with their own unique tastes, styles, languages and cultural nuances of their time.[44]

In addition to architecture (see chapter 3 above) as one way of representing individual taste and identity, it is equally important to ask questions such as 'what is portraiture? and what is its purpose? In some sense portraiture is the actual representation of an individual being (animal, human or otherwise), but in another way it is only the viewers' perception of that

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[39]S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*; these authors explain that "during the daytime, women treated their dwellings as fluid and open expanses, from which they surveyed the passing scene and emerged at will. They also freely resorted to each other's houseboy, making use of neighbours' dwellings much like a series of linked female spaces" (p. 206). Does this assume then that men were not present during the day? Did this distinction between day and night, men and women, really exist or is it a feature of our contemporary world that we are transporting back to the seventeenth-century?

[40]E. Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Cambridge, Mass.,1974), argues that it is impossible to find the 'real' person behind the image, that the actor manages his behaviour so well that the performance becomes the person and vice versa (pp. 252-3, 298). L. Pollock, "Concept of Privacy," states "it may well be that the keeping of disreputable family affairs quiet was of greater importance to men that to women" (p. 84) but this statement is unsubstantiated and dubious.

[41]E. Goffman, *The Presentation of the Self*, p. 19; the notion of role playing is discussed here as similar to putting on a 'mask' as our truer self: the self we would like to be.

[42]S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, p. 223, my emphasis; A. Laurence, *Women in England*, pp. 152-162.

[43]M. Pointon, *Strategies for Showing*, p. 2.

[44]A. T. Friedman, "Gender and the Meaning of Style in Early Modern England," in C. Lawrence (ed.), *Women and Art in Early Modern Europe: Patrons, Collectors, and Connoisseurs* (Pennsylvania, 1998), pp. 111-125.

representation. As for purpose, "identification is portraiture's most common practical use."[45] Perception and interpretation are the *sine qua non* of portraiture and therefore we must ask and be able to 'see' what the artist and sitter are trying to render. In seventeenth-century England the rendering was designed to illustrate one's character rather than just an office or title (as had been the focus in medieval times). Capturing the 'likeness' of those key personal attributes in painting was important because "the value of an individual, like any material good, could be socially damaged, destroyed or reconstructed."[46] The representation of that individual is really a claim about identity.

One such representation is *The Great Picture of Lady Anne Clifford,* a large triptych painted by Jan van Belcamp. "Portraits in the seventeenth century were part of family history, preserving the likeness of an individual, and accompanying it with signs of lineage, wealth and authority."[47] Jan van Belcamp depicts Anne's pride in her ancestry and the campaign to secure her rightful property (the hereditary titles and lands of the Clifford family). The work was commissioned by Lady Anne in 1646 and does more than vindicate a tenacious legal campaign that stretched over many decades. Each section of the triptych reveals Anne's judgment of people and ideas in relation to herself. Her mother, Lady Margaret Russell, was the profoundest influence in her life, and Lady Anne places her in the centre of the painting. Her father, George Clifford, 3rd Earl of Cumberland, is a more ambiguous figure for Anne largely because he refused to transmit to her the rightful inheritance and thus, in effect, became her enemy.[48] When it comes to her selection of books, the picture holds information about a wide selection ranging

[45]R. Ollard, "Clarendon and the Art of Prose Portraiture in the Age of Charles I," in D. Howarth (ed.), *Art and Patronage in the Caroline Courts: essays in honour of Sir Oliver Miller* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 189.

[46]L. Ferrante, "Honour Regained: Women in the Casa del Soccorsco di San Paolo in Sixteenth-Century Bologna," in Muir and Ruggerio (eds.), *Sex and Gender in Historical Perspective* (Baltimore, 1990), p. 57. Projecting the correct image was crucial as seen in the case where the Countess of Sussex requested Sir Ralph Verney (her client) ask Van Dyck to alter a portrait that he had done of her because she complained to Ralph that it made her appear 'truly too fat,' M. Slater, *Family Life in the Seventeenth Century: the Verneys of Claydon House* (London, 1984), p. 17, (letter dated 18 January 1639).

[47]G. Parry, "The Great Picture of Lady Anne Clifford," in D. Howarth (ed.), *Art and Patronage in the Caroline Courts: essays in honour of Sir Oliver Millar* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 202. It is also an invaluable acount of the cultural range of a seventeenth-century woman. "Lady Anne was as proud of her books as she was of her ancestors" (p.202). As seen by her artistic commissions, she was determined to preserve the records of the Clifford family and not only commemorated them in painting but also in tomb monuments and a collection of diaries.

[48]Towards the back of the picture is a family gallery which includes most of Anne's female relatives but excludes her male line, most notably absent is her uncle, Francis Clifford, the one who succeeded to the estates. The women include her mother's sisters, Anne Countess of Warwick and Elizabeth Countess of Bath, and her father's sisters, Margaret Countess of Derby and Frances Lady Wharton.

from the religious, to the political and philosophic.[49] One book, Sir Henry Wotton's *Elements of Architecture* (1624), needs to be given special attention here. Lady Anne became a great restorer of buildings and she used Wotton's book when she and her husband began to rebuild Wilton House. She preferred a plain gothic style, reminiscent of a time when the Cliffords were at the height of their power and prestige.[50] For Lady Anne, the attention she paid to her self-documentation was deliberate because she was entirely obsessed with being the last Clifford (her two brothers predeceased her) and she felt the need to deliberately display the family lineage for posterity. Her memoirs reveal both "the inner life — or rather a carefully constructed representation of it — and the outer world of daily affairs which went on around her."[51] In paintings, words and carvings, Anne constructed an identity separate from her husbands.[52]

In a picture of Mary Neville, Lady Dacre, by Hans Elworth, it is evident that masculine and feminine distinctions have been deliberately blurred for her representation. Lady Dacre is presented as sitting "solidly in an armchair, the very image of weighty, almost masculine, stability."[53] She displays some feminine 'props' in the painting such as a nosegay made with rosemary for remembrance, and she holds a devotional work in her hand, something fitting for ladies to read.[54] Her right hand is paused above another work. Typically, reading and writing in a pictorial context are most often attributed to a man's activities, but here they are performed by a "manly woman."[55] In a later double portrait with her son, Gregory, 10th Baron Dacre, we see the two notably in reversed positions of authority. Lady Dacre once again assumes the more traditional male position on the left of the painting and she also faces the viewer with almost a full frontal pose. Gregory, on the other hand, takes the 'backstage' position, displaying his tokens

[49] A. T. Friedman, "Constructing an Identity," states the collection was "a fairly conventional education with significant overlap with the libraries of other aristocratic woman" (p.365).

[50] G. Parry, "The Great Picture of Lady Anne Clifford," p. 218.

[51] A. T. Friedman, "Constructing an Identity in Prose, Plaster and Painting: Lady Anne Clifford as Writer and Patron of the Arts," in L. Gent (ed.), *Albion's Classicism: The Visual Arts in Britain, 1550-1660* (New Haven, 1995), p. 360.

[52] *Ibid.*, p. 362; R. M. Smuts, *Court Culture and the Origins of the Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England* pp. 95-97. Her representation of self, especially in the form of the triptych, shows her embracing of English history, culture and architectural traditions.

[53] E. Honig, "In Memory: Lady Dacre and Pairing by Hans Elworth," in L. Gent and N. Llewellyn (eds.), *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture c. 1540-1660* (London, 1990), p. 60.

[54] S. W. Hull, *Chaste, Silent and Obedient*, pp. 91-105.

[55] E. Honig, *Lady Dacre*, p. 62. Both the structural composition of the painting as well as the pictorial metaphors found within it bind together elements of images of the past, present and future of Lady Dacre's life as a widow. It would seem that the meaning of this particular picture, and how Lady Dacre has presented herself within it was restore the honour of the Dacre family after Thomas Fiennes, Baron Dacre was executed for murder in 1541. Thus, Lady Dacre is functioning as a conduit to this restoration for the sake of the family's honour.

of wealth in an invisible, inexpressive and passive manner in contrast to how his mother fingers her rings on her both hands.[56] Committing one's appearance to art is paradoxical because representation, as real life, is visible and temporal but at the same time the images remain long after the sitter has passed on. Because of its ability to construct an image and to immortalize it, portrait painting in England was raised "to a level of respect that rendered it virtually inviolate."[57]

Women were interested, as were men, in their visual representation in paintings, sculpture and architectural design because of the way that all of these things 'spoke' of an identity of the individual. According to certain conventions of any given period, the representation of a face, or body seemed to adhere to popular 'rules' of the time. Despite the 'norms' of the time, there was considerable flexibility and negotiation of boundaries, as discussed earlier regarding Household systems. Individuals within the society would know the way a portrait was supposed to look and thus could instantly recognize when an artist did something out of the ordinary and subsequently would make value judgements about the deviation. In the early seventeenth century, the style that the English adopted was modelled on the Italian Baroque. This style "managed to convey, as no portraits had yet done, a sense of naturalistic illusion, of the breathing and lively presences, and at the same times still to exalt the person, superhuman, to convey through him [or her] an ideal majesty."[58] Fashions changed, too, and were naturally reflected in representation in paintings. In the early part of the century, a French influence can be widely detected and even though this was most obvious at court, it was subsequently imitated throughout the country. The ideal of feminine beauty changed to one of 'plumpness', one that was more roundly sensual and coloured with cream and lush clarets. The cultural resources and expectations that are used by an individual in constructing and displaying their self-identity were in flux and this is manifest in the changes in artistic representation over the century.

Patrons of art and artists valued visual depiction and that can be verified by their choice of artist and the mode of representation. It is no wonder that patrons sought out visual representation from particularly skilled artists because such an image could portray their identity so forcefully and successfully. Anthony van Dyck brought to England a Continental Baroque style which he necessarily adapted to English tastes. "His sitters found themselves, their spit and

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[56] *Ibid.*, p. 67.
[57] *Ibid.*, p. 76. Portraits were meant for public display of one's *self* but yet were held in private possession where one could control who would see the representation.
[58] D. Piper, *The English Face* (London, 1978), p. 92.

living image, but somehow a little larger than life, and more glamorous."[59] His portrait of Lady Castlehaven represents her as "a woman of rank, fashion and beauty; " [her face] "left us with the living image of a character vivid enough to contain [values] and much more, even the spectator's charity."[60] One lady, Dorothy Osborne commented that getting portraits commissioned was clearly a normal part of living. During the seventeenth-century, the portraiture offered up a host of specific 'characters', unique individuals, "each one scrutinised in his or her rôle as gentleman or gentle woman" and each one with a distinct *identity*.[61]

Specifically, how then does art convey authority and identity? It is well known to have been used as political propaganda and to have been open to definite 'manipulations'.[62] We can also state that it was used as individual propaganda — that is, as a means to convey specific messages in a convincing way. Men and women were equally involved as subjects of painting and as collectors.[63] Women were known to have influence in their network circles, some at court, others elsewhere.[64] They were adept at knowing what they wanted included in portraits, such as architectural elements or different poses of the body. In Paul van Somer's portrait, *Anne of Denmark*, it appears through symbolic analysis that Anne "may have wished her brother increase of 'his glory and state' but this image was her way of seeking the same for herself."[65] As patrons of art, in general, the inclusion of "buildings, parks, and gardens [were all] geared to the efficient running of a little world where greater ambitions were rehearsed," and thus every action and

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[59] *Ibid.*, p. 103. "Modern scholarship on Van Dyck suggests his portraiture is richer in hidden meaning than was once thought," D. Howarth, *Images of Rule*, "he fused the emblematic with an astounding realism" (p. 131).

[60] *Ibid.*, p. 109. Van Dyke's successor, Peter Lely, did a portrait of Dorothy Osborne in c. 1653, in his typical honest and forthright style. She writes about it saying that she had thought of sending it to her fiancé but later reconsidered knowing no matter how good the likeness, it would not be the same as having her there, (p. 125, n. 42). No other reference available.

[61] D. Piper, *The English Face*, p. 147.

[62] D. Howarth, *Images of Rule*, p. 127. Countless examples abound and not only from England nor solely from the seventeenth century. The Van Dyck *Charles I in Three Positions*, was done for Bernini, whom Henrietta Maria had commissioned to sculpt a bust of Charles I. Bernini had to get special permission to this from Urban VIII, who, along with his diplomats in London thought that the canonical privilege along with the effect of the finished product itself would actually help to bring England back to the Catholic faith, p. 147.

[63] Art collecting was a favourite past time for many women. Lady Arundel was in Genoa in 1623 and had arranged for herself to buy Raphael's Cartoons for the Sistine Tapestries. She asked for help in the transactions from Charles I who willingly became involved and ordered them on her behalf. Lady Arundel used her interest in art to curry favour with Charles I (a well-known connoisseur himself) because she wanted the coveted role of first lady at court and saw herself as accompanying the Infanta from Spain to England thus out manoeuvring the Duchess of Buckingham; D. Howarth, argument given in a paper on Lady Arundel, given at *New Perspectives on the Earl and Countess of Arundel: Collecting in the Stuart Court*, Getty Museum, Autumn 1995.

[64] Anne of Denmark (wife of James I) had a passion for painting and "induced a competitive atmosphere as courtiers vied with each other to present her with a choice painting," p. 127; Henrietta Maria exercised "significant backstairs influence in [her] reign," D. Howarth, p. 127.

[65] *Ibid.*, p. 131. Anne's brother was Christian IV of Denmark and she had 'C4' painted on the lobe of her collar.

representation was undertaken deliberately and for a specific purpose.[66] Depictions in art may look like a snapshot of a daily activity but a closer look reveals information about the identity they wished to create.

Because we are discussing the relationships between men and women and the corresponding ways they fashioned their respective identities, it is valuable to consider marriage portraits. The dual or pair portrait "represented the proclamations of a treaty between great powers."[67] This was not only important for royal families but also for the landed gentry. Moreover, because the marital relationship binds husband and wife more tightly together than blood ties bind them separately to their kin groups, we can assume that much careful calculation of the message lay behind this type of painting.[68] One of the most famous paintings done by Van Dyck, *The Pembroke Family* (c. 1630), suggests the effect of an crucial marriage of Lady Mary Villiers to Pembroke's eldest son, Charles, Lord Herbert, along with a £10,000 dowry. Pembroke's second wife, Lady Anne Clifford, appears in the painting in a tense, sullen isolation and dressed in black (although some think this was Lady Susan Verney, his first wife). Many indicators in the painting point to the theme of living and future progeny. Parents, in partnership, were responsible for the children and all society knew that "the production of a son and heir was the landowner's *raison d'être*", [69] so it is not surprising that the parents would want the lasting memories to be captured for posterity. Importantly, family portraits, as slightly differently than marriage portraits, were often used to directly mirror significant domestic scenes. They uniquely detailed and captured the values and relationships existing in family affairs and in this way distinguished the identity of each individual as well as established a group identity.

Visual representation was not only valuable for the living but also for the dead.[70] Lady Jane Bacon, wife of Sir Nathaniel Bacon, was very involved in creating specific remembrances of

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[66] *Ibid.*, p. 173.
[67] *Ibid.*, p. 226.
[68] D. O. Hughes, Representing the Family: Portraits and Purposes in Early Modern Italy," in R. I. Rotberg and T. K. Rabb (eds.), *Art and History: Images and Their Meaning* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 9; although her analysis deals primarily with Italian art, there are many similarities in how women's identity was asserted through paintings. Petrus Cristus, *Portrait of a Male Donor* and *Portrait of a Female Donor* (c. 1455) shows how her familial coat of arms appears on the wall above her head signifying her separate identity in the midst of marriage. For a discussion on marriage portraits see D. R. Smith, *Masks of Wedlock* (Ann Arbor, 1978).
[69] M. Abbott, *Family Ties*, p. 47.
[70] For a general discussion on tomb and funeral monuments see, D. Howarth, chapter five, "The Tomb" in *Images of Rule* and see chapter five in J. Cranston, *The Poetics of Portraiture in the Italian Renaissance* (Cambridge, 2000).

herself as woman, wife and mother.[71] Her distinctly designed tomb memorializes her in a way exactly as she had calculated (as can be read in the contract that survived). The centrepiece of the tomb is Lady Bacon herself, holding a small child on her lap, flanked on right and left by more children and at her feet lies a full-size male under whom is a lengthy inscription. It is clear from the design of the tomb itself as well as a collection of correspondence and other documents that Lady Bacon "intended that her tomb *should* be a text to be read by observers, a text that moved beyond the usual expressions of familial piety and lineage identity or the articulation of pious platitudes about the spiritual and social worth of the intended."[72] Thus, her self-fashioning in death corresponds to the construction of her social identity and authority in life. Her stone image resembles what one would recognize as a nun and this suggests a woman who sacrificed for the survival of her lineage (the children surrounding her are not all her own, but also those of nieces and nephews) and became "a rock on which the house [of the Cornwallises and Bacons] was founded."[73]

The experience of Lady Jane should not be viewed as obscure or odd.[74] In her network circle, she had many female friends who were regularly engaged in similar activities. One of these women, Lucy, Countess of Bedford, was a confidante of Anne of Denmark, a patroness of writers, and an independent woman when it came to her marriage to a complaisant husband. It was contacts such as this one that no doubt encouraged Lady Jane in her ability to make use of these connections to her advantage. The correspondence of Lady Jane, as preserved by herself, suggests "in addition a perception of the importance of correspondence as an affirmation of her centrality in a nexus of family, kin, and like-minded friends."[75]

It was not only paintings that had value in early modern society. Prints of varying kinds came to be vested with intellectual authority and had agency in early modern Europe. Adept viewers of all ranks had a "culturally determined set of associations with the printed image, " no

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[71]N. Llewellyn, "Honour in Life, Death and in Memory: Funeral Monuments in Early Modern England," in *TRHS*, 6th series, VI (Cambridge, 1996) details how 'weighty responsibilities were expected of them" (p. 179). Indices of the social status of the deceased can be found in his *Signs of Life: Funeral Monuments in the Visual Culture of Post-Reformation England* (Cambridge, 2000)

[72]F. Heal and C. Holmes, "*Prudentia ultra sexum*', p. 101.

[73]*Ibid.*, p. 104.

[74]For examples of women who might also be considered 'odd' by other scholars see: A. Wall, "Elizabethan Precepts and Feminine Practice: The Thynne Family of Longleat," *History*, 75 (1991), pp. 23-38; C. Durston, *The Family in the English Revolution* (Oxford, 1989); J. Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads: The Harleys of Brampton Bryan and the Outbreak of the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 2000); D. J. Clifford, *The Diaries of Lady Anne Clifford* (1991).

[75]Heal and Holmes, '*Prudentia ultra sexum*', p. 111; Lady Jane Cornwallis, *Private Correspondence*, pp.79-80.

matter what their status in society.[76] In contrast to expensive paintings or other works of art, "prints were relatively cheap and had the capacity to represent 'all the visible productions of art and nature', they could appeal and afford knowledge to folk of all professions and stations."[77] Inexpensive prints gave the viewer social mobility because it opened up a world of viewing as 'collector of curiosities.' There existed a social hierarchy in visual representative forms, emblems were essentially "a language of the learned and literal" but even those of lesser degree knew something of their meaning.[78] People learned how to 'read' the images whether the subject matter was allegorical, mythological, biblical, political or otherwise. For instance, the frequently used frontispiece served to glorify its author and the work and to epitomise the book. In early modern society, language, in the form of writs, statutes, sermons, books, and letters, formed the principal means of socialization, education and power. However, one should not assume that language in the form of text is the only type of language available to people. Therefore, "historians would be remiss if they neglected the didactic and persuasive power of this alternative analogic domain. Analysis of cultural cohesion, and the relationships between men and women represented within that system, would be limited if it omitted the force of spectacle, the significance of imagery, and the effects of symbolic action, as depicted in visual imagery."[79] As the Duke of Newcastle advised Charles II, "though ceremony is nothing in itself, yet it doth everything."[80] Attaining the skill set which enabled one to be able to read a picture or understand symbolic imagery was a necessity for early modern men and women because of the link between representation, performance and identity. "Works of art are elaborate mechanisms for defining social relationships, sustaining social rules, and strengthening social values."[81]

Self-Fashioning and Performance

Many studies have focussed on ideas about gender and on representations and ideologies. The analysis below will focus more on social practice, primarily looking at everyday self-

[76] W. B. MacGregor, "The Authority of Prints: an early modern perspective," *Art History*, 22 (1999), p. 393.
[77] *Ibid.*, p. 396; see also A. M. Hind (ed.), *Great Engravers: Van Dyck and Portrait Engraving and Etching in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1911).
[78] M. Corbett and R. Lightbown (eds.), *The Comely Frontispiece* (London, 1979), p. 15; R. Freeman, *English Emblem Books* (New York, 1966).
[79] D. Cressy, "Different Kinds of Speaking: Symbolic Violence and Secular Iconoclasm in Early Modern England," in M. C. McClendon, J. P. Ward and M. MacDonald (eds.), *Protestant Identities*, p. 19.
[80] S. A. Strong (ed.), *A Catalogue of Letters and Other Historical Documents Exhibited in the Library at Welbeck* (London, 1903), p. 189.
[81] C. Geertz, "Art as a Cultural System,", p. 99.

representation through the codes and conduct of interactive behaviour. I have argued that in the seventeenth-century the practice of separate spheres is not obvious.[82] Certainly, in the early eighteenth century, women were thought to play an important role in the encouragement of polite public discourse - as agents of politeness and civility in contrast to male gravity and vulgarity.[83] It is clear, too, that men and women alike valued honour and reputation in their behaviour. Because "all life was public in early modern England, or at least had public, social or communal dimensions," everyone had to pay attention to the 'rules' of performance.[84] Because families were interconnected by alliances, or networks "routine transactions of everyday life were [...] subject to community interest...women and men were displayed to the community, or to representatives of the community, at the most crucial moments of their lives; and all took part in a choreographed social performance in which actors and audience knew their parts."[85]

We can see then through performance (namely, social action), the construction of identity and subsequent agency. It goes beyond what some may assume to be 'common sense' because this varies from culture to culture and should "therefore be viewed as a 'cultural system', or part of one, in other words [...]as 'a relatively organized body of considered thought'.[86] The individual, or self, is not an object of nature, according to Nietzsche, but instead "it is a product of social and cultural relations."[87] Moreover, the individual is not considered to be something given; it is "something added and invented and projected behind what there is" in everyday experience.[88] The individual is not an essence but they are formed as part of a set of relationships.[89] 'Culture' itself is a *system* of shared meanings, attitudes and values and they are

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[82]R. B. Shoemaker, "*Separate Spheres?* Ideology and Practice in London Gender Relations, 1660-1740," in M. C. McClendon, J. P. Ward and M. MacDonald (eds.), *Protestant Identities*, p. 270, describes the status of separate spheres as being one of uncertainty. Gender differences did exist but they did not form the basis for the long process that developed in its fullest realization in the nineteenth century of separating homelife and the world 'outside'.

[83]R. Shoemaker, "*Separate Spheres?*", p. 272 names the *Spectator* and the *Tatler*. The writing in these highly influential periodicals conceptualized women and men as fundamentally different in terms of the virtues they possessed; in fact, they "in some way undermined, rather than reinforced, the model of separate spheres found in the conduct book," p. 286.

[84]"Walls had ears, and everybody's business was a matter of credit, reputation or common fame," D. Cressy, "Response," p. 187.

[85]*Ibid.*, pp. 188, 189.

[86]P. Burke, *The Art of Conversation* (Ithaca, New York, 1993), p. 94 (citing C. Geertz, "Common sense as a cultural system," *Local Knowledge*, p. 75).

[87]M. Mascuch, *Origins of the Individualist Self: Autobiography and Self-Identity in England, 1591-1791* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 15; C. Geertz, "'From the Native's Point of View', *Local Knowledge*, pp. 55-70.

[88]F. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York, 1967), p. 267.

[89]K. Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (Oxford, 1983), p. 52; A. Macfarlane, *The Origins of English Individualism: The Family, Property and Social Transition* (Oxford, 1978), must be included here as the basis for subsequent scholarship on this topic.

expressed and embodied in symbolic forms (performances, artefacts).[90] Norbert Elias identified the 'process of civilization' as a process of individualization whereby the person, the individual, in 'figuration' with other individuals, learned codified behaviours that identified them in comparison to others.[91] The interdependencies that develop as part of social interaction are linked to power relations that should be understood as "a fluctuating, tensile equilibrium, a balance of power moving to and fro, inclining first to one side then to the other."[92] However, this is not to imply a defining or shifting of the balance of power between the sexes, it must be thought of in a broader historical context. "History cannot be understood as a monolithic invariant of male domination."[93]

How did seventeenth-century performances define 'self' and establish self-identity through these behavioural interactions? If "a personal self-identity is an effect of human activity in the landscape of society and culture," then exploring the individual within that society and culture should lead us back to some understanding of the early modern concept of the 'self'.[94] After all, "individuals should be thought of as the sum of the forms of life in which they play a role."[95] The agency ascribed to self-identity allows each person to underwrite the dramatic interpersonal performances of self that were an essential feature of everyday life.[96] These deliberate behaviours were necessarily conventional, symbolic and highly adapted to seventeenth-century society. Household should be understood as a stage or theatre on which those who inhabit its world are the actors, people who are "engaged in a continuing conversation, constructing their public personae, without the indelible mark of character. [They move] on a field of powerful cultural symbols that were the medium of their actions."[97] These 'actors' had agency because they made significant choices and they influenced relations between individuals

[90]P. Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (London, 1978), p. xi.
[91]N. Elias, *The Society of Individuals*, M. Schröter (ed.), E. Jephcott, trans. (Oxford, 1991), pp. 121-151; M. Featherstone, "Norbert Elias" and J. Goudsblom, "The Sociology of Norbert Elias: Its Resonance and Significance," *Theory, Culture & Society*, 4 (1987), pp. 323-336.
[92]N. Elias, *What is Sociology?* (London, 1978), p. 131; Elias's main works offer the most comprehensive explanation of his views, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners*, E. Jephcott, trans.(Oxford, 1978) and *The Civilizing Process: State Formation and Civilization*, E. Jephcott, trans. (Oxford, 1982). My emphasis diverts from Elias's because I am not tracing a teleology of manners and behaviour but rather trying to understand gentlewomen's behaviour and how that links with agency in society.
[93]M. Featherstone, "Figurational Sociology," p. 204.
[94]M. Mascuch, *Origins of the Individualist Self*, p. 18; and see S. Mennell, *Norbert Elias: Civilization and the Human Self- Image* (Oxford, 1989).
[95]H. M. Collins, *Changing Order: replication and induction in scientific practice* (California, 1985), p. 148.
[96]E. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self*, the *locus classicus* of performative sociology focusses on dramatic interaction between individuals as actors on the stage of life.
[97]A. J. Slavin, " On Henrician Politics: Games and Drama," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 60 (1999), p. 270.

and structures within their society.

Relatively little has been written about the norms and forms of manners, or modes of conduct in the patterns of social rituals, that is, the coding of the interactions of people in early modern society.[98] "Far from being a peripheral or trivial area of individual behaviour, forms of polite social conduct are all pervasive"[99] and in placing them within the study of Household, we may get a better understanding of the relationship of gentlefolk to their social structures. It is important to see that status, position, or social placement are not material things that can be possessed then displayed. The behaviour associated with these things are patterns of appropriate conduct, coherent, embellished, and well articulated.[100] Issues relating to gender and space will figure into this portion of the analysis because much of the debate about 'civility' has been influenced by gender questions. For instance,

> Honour and then Civility provided conceptions of manly behaviour and self-expression which built upon this basic image of the man who had first mastered himself. But when we turn to women, although there is a consistent underlying sense of limited and specific childbearing and domestic purposes, the keynote is discontinuity.[101]

Anthony Fletcher's assertions, however, are largely based on the prescriptive literature. David Cressy cautions that conduct literature is normative and conservative and the historical reality, as supported by evidence of diaries and court records, shows "that actual behaviour and ideas were variable, nuanced, unstable, and shifting," and, moreover, *not* based on gender divisions.[102] Regardless of the debate about real or ideal, it is clear that prescriptive literature did have an influential place in the culture. In the construction of her wifely identity, Lady Sarah Cowper "explicitly examined herself according to those capacities and advanced claims that were derived from her redoing of prescriptive explications of the duties and rights of those roles."[103]

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[98] A. Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1998), p. 1.

[99] *Ibid.*, p. 2; M. Girouard, *Life in the English Country House*, deals with society, social behaviour and the household; P. Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1770* (Oxford, 1989), part iv; F. Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England.*

[100] E. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self* "performed with ease or clumsiness, awareness or not, guile or good faith, it is none the less something that must be enacted and portrayed, something that must be realized" (p. 75).

[101] A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination*, p. 412. Fletcher argues in "Manhood, the Male Body, Courtship and the Household in Early Modern England," *History*, 84 (July 1999), that "after the Restoration...a new culture of civility and politeness began to replace the old language of honour and this led to the development of much more self-conscious models of masculinity" (p. 436).

[102] D. Cressy, "Response," p. 190. Robert Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society*, p. 286.

[103] A. Kugler, "Constructing Wifely Identity," p. 300. One of Lady Sarah's ongoing complaints was that her husband, William tried to usurp her authority in the household. The tension got so high in one instance that Sarah went on strike and eventually William capitulated in his attempts, p. 309. "Lady Sarah selected and interpreted scripture, history, poetry, devotional works, sermons, and conduct books to formulate and buttress her claims to domestic authority," p. 304.

Prescriptive literature is one of the cultural resources men and women worked with in fashioning self-image and identity.

There is no doubt that gender factors into the equation between men, women, their respective roles and responsibilities in everyday life.[104] Gender and sex roles were 'coded' and codified to some extent, albeit in different ways, but still for the same purpose: to maintain the status quo in the social order. If we consider the documentation from the seventeenth-century, we see that men and women had those in their 'gender' who operated outside the accepted norms and thus threatened the stability.[105] It is true that deviation from the norms did exist and was obvious "since not all women followed the model of appropriate behaviour imposed on them by a traditional society."[106] However, an analysis of the patterns that lie behind this diversity, for men *and* for women, reveals that even the most flagrant defiance of norms fell within a predictable and narrowly defined range.[107]

How was order maintained and how did individuals adhere to proper codes of conduct? Men and women alike were enabled as well as constrained by the institutionalized structures of early modern society.[108] Honour and reputation were based on rank, character, public repute, and credit.[109] How one assessed these values depended on a number of contingent factors such as dress, deportment, manners, speech, occupation, pleasures, hospitality, family lineage and even the manner of one's death. "Dress and manners were not mere externals: they were manifestations of internal worth, graceful supplements to nobility...dress was meant to make status visible."[110] The 'rules' were culturally contextualized and internalized and utterly familiar

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[104]Sexuality, as a component of gender study, is not marginal to historical analysis, A. Bray, "Homosexuality," p. 2; R. Trexler, *Sex & Conquest. Gendered Violence, Political Order, and the European Conquest of the Americas* (New York, 1995), pp. 6-7.

[105]O. Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her*, pp. 45-7 for a discussion of how men felt threatened if women challenged the patriarchal authority.

[106]S. Mendelson, *The Mental World*, p. 185. The diary of the life of Lady, Sarah Cowper "offers a specific link between the ideologies that institutions and authorities were concerned to promulgate and the outlook of the individual;" it also "bridges the gap between prescription and practice that bedevils historians attempting to explore the mental worlds of persons living in previous centuries," A. Kugler, "Constructing Wifely Identity," p. 292.

[107]See A. Kruger, p. 292. Male deviance is discussed in A. Shepard, "Manhood," pp. 79-82. Some stated that there was a 'crisis of order' in the early part of the seventeenth-century, D. Underdown, "The Taming of the Scold," p. 116; S. Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, pp. 181-2

[108]J. E. Howard, "Producing New Knowledge," in S. Frye and K. Robertson (eds.), *Maids and Mistresses*, p. 309; M. Douglas, *How Institutions Think* (Syracuse, N. Y., 1986).

[109]A. Shepard, "Manhood, Credit and Patriarchy," p. 101; S. Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, p. 155; A. Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility*, p. 58.

[110]D. Kuchta, "The Semiotics of Masculinity," in J. G. Turner (ed.), *Sexuality and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, p. 235; F. Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege*, p. 147; E. Goffman, *Encounters: Two Studies in the Sociology of Interaction* (Indianapolis, 1963), pp. 87, 145.

— a cultural language. Such was the case for verbal exchange between parties, whereby silence was equally important as was audible conversation.[111] Individual men and women were taught from a young age how to follow the rules through interactions with "participants who are knowledgeable about the rules they should follow and their own ability to *manipulate* these rules."[112] Both could become adept at such intricate manipulations and machinations. Moreover, "for the individual's activity [...] to become significant to others, he must mobilize his activity so that it will express *during the interaction* what he wishes to convey."[113]

Not only was honour and reputation important to the individual, but as we have seen so far in this context of Household (which includes both the individual and their relationship to the community at large) that Household was the stage on which the performances of interaction took place. Honour came from family and lineage and was thus inherited and not solely contingent on an individual's possession of it.[114] One's honour had a far-reaching influence on one's choices in life from finding a marriage partner to choosing sides in the Civil Wars.[115] Honour should be understood as synonymous with reputation and a good name and it was a commodity that invoked specific duties to King, family and community. Gentlemen and gentlewomen had shared responsibilities to family when it came to upholding honour and these expectations and duties were practised on an everyday basis. Reciprocal arrangements pervaded the lives of society in early modern England and contemporaries thought of honour, "not as an intangible quality, but rather as a commodity to be gained or lost."[116] The authors of conduct books assumed that their readers would understand the underlying structure of the system of honour, for this structure was based upon the most pervasive institution of seventeenth-century society, the family.[117]

It was of crucial importance to uphold familial and kin reputation. Sir Ralph Verney warned a cousin who had spoken badly of a relation, "in castinge such false aspertions...she did

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[111]P. Burke, "Notes for a Social History of Silence in Early Modern Europe," in his *The Art of Conversation* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1993), pp. 123-141.

[112]P. Manning, *Erving Goffman and Modern Sociology* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 175, my emphasis; M. Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," pp. 85-6.

[113]E. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self*, p. 30.

[114]R. Cust, "Honour and Politics in Early Stuart England," *Past & Present*, 149 (1995), p. 60

[115]For an analysis of the effect of the Civil Wars had on the family see, C. Durston, *The Family in the English Revolution* (1989).

[116]J. G. Marston, "Gentry Honor and Royalism in Early Stuart England," *Journal of British Studies*, 8 (1973-74), p. 24; C. L. Barber, *The Idea of Honour in the English Drama, 1591-1700* (Goteburg, 1957), p.101.

[117]J. G. Marston, "Gentry Honor," p. 27.

but defile her owne nest."[118] Even when families were divided along political lines, honour done to the family was of the utmost consideration. Royalist Lady Fanshawe had to pass through Parliamentary lines and for help she turned to her cousin, Henry Nevill, a high Parliamentary official who granted her a pass.[119] In other critical decisions such as marriage, most gentlemen preferred good lineage to a good fortune. For that reason, Sir Symonds D'Ewes chose an heiress of the Barnardiston family in preference over a much richer City woman because his "chief aim was to enrich my posterity with good blood, knowing it the greates honour that can betide a family, to be often linked into the female inheritices of ancient stocks."[120] Further to the point about loyalty, it should be understood that services due one's friends were close in nature to those due one's family. Lady Brilliana Harley used all her family friends within her network when she felt her son should have a seat in Parliament.[121]

Reputation depended on a number of factors and many of these hinged on the honour of the wife. In *A Godlie Forme of Household Governement,* it states, "It should be noted, and noted againe, that as the provision of [the] houshould dependeth onely on the Husband: even so the honour of all dependeth onely on the woman; in such sort, that there is no honour within the house, longer than a mans wife is honorable."[122] This does not mean that male duties were characterized as active and acquisitive, whereas female duties were passive and defensive.[123] Rather, women were active in cultivating authority and exercising agency both within the Household and beyond it.[124] "Far from being cloistered in solitude, women defied any simple separation of 'public' and 'private' spheres."[125] Credit, as synonymous with reputation, involved

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[118]Ralph Verney to Sir Edmund Verney, June 18, 1639, F. P. Verney and M. Verney (eds.), *Memoirs,* vol. I, p. 171.

[119]B. Marshall (ed.) *Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe,* (London, 1905), p. 115; in another instance, Sir Ralph Verney, a Parliamentarian, made a request of the jailer of his Royalist brother-in-law that his "brother" be afforded "such respect as may be fit for a gentlemen in his distresse," Sir Ralph Verney in a letter to Sir Philip Stapleton, June 21, 1643, in F. P. and M. Verney (eds.), *Memoirs,* vol. I, p. 247.

[120]J. O. Halliwell (ed.), *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Sir Simonds D'Ewes* (London, 1845), vol. I, pp. 308-9.

[121]T. T. Lewis (ed.), *Letters of Lady Brilliana Harley,* pp. 163-64. As Castiglione noted, "a gentleman should always be lively and diligent in serving and forwarding the advantage and honor of his friends," in G. Bull (trans.), B. Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier* (Middlesex, 1967), p. 139.

[122]J. Dod and R. Cleaver, *A Godly Forme of Householde Governement: For the Ordering of Private Families, According to the Direction of Gods Word* [1612], pp. 167-8.

[123]This is the interpretation of A. Shepard, "Manhood,"p. 75.

[124]M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife,* p. 2; S. Amussen, *An Ordered Society;* L. Pollock, 'Teach her to Live Under Obedience'; S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England;* A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex & Subordination.*

[125]I make this point again and in addition to previous references on this matter now add, P. Crawford, "Public Duty;" B. Capp, "Separate Domains? Women and Authority in Early Modern England," in P. Griffiths, A. Fox and S. Hindle (eds), *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 117-145.

social and economic appraisals, in which men and women similarly had a considerable stake.[126] When it comes to the debate about honour and reputation and its ties to chastity, recent contributions on the debate have "emphasized a degree of overlap between the sexes, focussing on the broader foundations of female honesty beyond chastity and on the damaging potential of sexual slander for men."[127] Even how a woman spoke could enhance or damage her reputation for "one of women's greatest strengths resided in discourse and women's verbal networks operated within the domestic sphere, between households and farther afield."[128] The opportunity to speak in public was afforded to women when it came to the exercise of religious experiences during the Civil war period. In that specific set of circumstances, "religion was their most powerful justification for activity which was outside their conventional roles."[129] However, this should not be understood as a type of 'feminist consciousness' whereby it is something "expressed most strongly in response to opposition.[130] Additionally, this consciousness cannot be understood as an exclusive entity because, in Household, interactions occurred between men *and* women.

One of the specific traits needed for honourable behaviour is that of 'gentility'. "Gentility is derived from our Ancestors to us, but soone blanched, if not revived by vertue...gentility is not knowne by what we weare, but what we are; there are natuve ffeds of goonesse sowne in generous bloods by lineall succession; how these may be ripened by instruction."[131] One's character could be modified and, hence, deliberately constructed. In fact, "gentility was a key element in conferring intellectual authority, because the social and moral qualities of gentlemen [and women] were guarantees of scientific rationality and objectivity.[132] There are specific duties assigned to the concept of 'character', too, one of which includes the instruction to women that

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[126]C. Muldrew, "Interpreting the Market: The Ethics of Credit and Community Relations in Early Modern England," *Social History*, 18 (1993), and C. Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 1998), chapters 5-6.

[127]A. Shepard, "Manhood," p. 77; G. Walker, "Expanding the Boundaries"; F. Dabhoiwala, "The Construction of Honour, Reputation and Status in Late-Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England," *TRHS*, 6th series, vi (1996); B. Capp, "The Double Standard Revisited": Plebeian Women and Male Sexual Reputation in Early Modern England," *Past & Present*, 162 (1999).

[128]S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, p. 215; "women's speech was the 'glue' that held female collectivities together, facilitating a culture of cooperation and exchange" (p. 218).

[129]P. Crawford, *Women and Religion*, p. 210.

[130]*Ibid.*, p. 211. See also, T. Kaplan, "Female Consciousness and Collective Action," *Signs* 7 (1982), pp. 545-550. As an example of a woman who exhibited this female consciousness, both during and after the Civil Wars, see Anne, Viscountess Conway, in her collection of letters that covers 1642-1684 frequently discusses scientific, philosophical and religious issues with her correspondents, M. H. Nicolson, *Conway Letters : The Correspondence of Anne, Viscountess Conway, Henry More, and their Friends, 1642-1684* (London, 1930).

[131]R. Brathwait, *The English Gentlewoman* (London, 1631), p. 157.

[132]H. R. French, " 'Ingenious & Learned Gentlemen'- social perceptions and self-fashioning among parish elites in Essex, 1680-1740," *Social History*, 25 (January 2000), p. 47.

their 'houshold she makes her Commonwealth; wherein not any from the highest to the lowest of her feminine government, but she knows their peculiar office and employments: to which they addresse themselves (so highly they honour her they serve) with more live then feare.' Braithwait also details apparel, honour, fancy, decency complement and estimation. It was via these tasks or appearance that women could define and shape their identity.[133] Similar in scope to those traits of gentlemen, women needed to embrace the concepts of probity, uprightness, fair-dealing and respectability.[134] Samuel Pepys wrote in his diary dismissing the Duchess of Newcastle's deportment and dress in the same breath as stating that he did not 'hear her say anything that was worth hearing' thereby marginalizing her authority.[135]

'Civility' was another component of codified behaviour (ie. performance) in polite company. The performance can be described as "dramatic 'representations' of personal qualities."[136] As Goffman points out, 'demeanour', the outward display of civil behaviour, is "that element of an individual's [man or woman] ceremonial behaviour typically conveyed through deportment, dress and bearing, which serves to express to those in his [hers] immediate presence that he [she] is a person of certain desirable or undesirable qualities."[137] English writers on civility based their writing on the works of Erasmus, Della Casa, the Bible and Greek and Roman classics. In the seventeenth-century, social relationships were preoccupied with the full-scale dramatization of social identity — "a systematic attempt to relate rules of behaviour to questions of individual personality and a stress on what may be termed self-presentation or 'self-fashioning.'"[138] Everything from dancing to dining was coded in ritualized behaviours that signified the degree to which one could capably demonstrate 'impression management.'[139]

The precepts of 'civil behaviour' were outlined in an intricate and highly artificial code of behaviour that involved: demeanour, deportment, gesture and conversation.[140] This code had to be adaptable because "the language of deference was one which, by its nature, varied with the

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[133] S. Frye, and K. Robertson, *Maids and Mistresses*, discusses how needlework was a form of religious symbolism and part of what shaped female identity, pp 177-179.

[134] S. Shapin, *A Social History of Truth* (Chicago, 1994), chapters 2 and 3, pp. 42-125.

[135] R. Latham and W. Matthews (eds.), *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (Berkeley, 1974), vol. viii, pp. 242-243.

[136] A. Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility*, p. 108.

[137] E. Goffman, "The Nature of Deference and Demeanor," *American Anthropologist* 58 (1956), p. 489.

[138] S. Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (Chicago, 1980) explores this term in detail; quote from A. Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility*, p. 108.

[139] E. Goffman, *The Presentation of Self*, details this process throughout his book. S. Howard, *The Politics of Courtly Dancing in Early Modern England* (Massachusetts, 1998) explains how "[dancing] becomes essential in a well-ordered society," (p. 51).

[140] J. W. Mason, *Gentlefolk in the Making: Studies in the History of English Courtesy Literature and Related Topics From 1531-1774* (New York, 1971), p. 251.

social situation and the rank of the people involved."[141] Thus individual identity was linked to social identity by means of constructed behaviour. This constructed image in turn conveyed status and authority through everyday social ritual.[142] It was all about 'witnessed' behaviour where the major virtues of character were performed to enhance reputation: courage, integrity, gallantry, composure, presence of mind, dignity, and stage confidence.[143] For women, specifically, this would include: learn to read well (no play books, romances or love books), do useful needlework, attain a thorough and practical understanding of housekeeping in all its branches.[144] She was expected to choose friends wisely and there is an emphasis on character, not class or rank as the most important quality in making those decisions. George Savile, Marquess of Halifax, wrote a treatise of advice to his daughter Elizabeth (who became the mother of the fourth Earl of Chesterfield) in which he encouraged her to manage her household well (not with 'indecent thrift' nor with 'loose profusion') and also she should not allow her clothes to be too gaudy. He implores her to "remember that virtue is the greatest ornament, and good sense the best equipage."[145] In the seventeenth-century, personal identity was based on achieved rather than ascribed characteristics.[146]

"For the majority of married men and women, the maintenance and survival of their household was their predominant, and — most importantly — their *mutual* concern, which required adaptability and the best possible use of resources rather than adherence to a patriarchal blueprint."[147] Yes, honour, reputation and overall coding of behaviour were gender-related but they were not gender-specific. Men did not and simply could not monopolize the social, economic, and legal worlds of seventeenth-century society by their networks. Women were integrally involved as partners in preserving the family reputation and lineage. The modern

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[141]A. Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility*, p. 110. A great deal of her book is taken up with the analysing of the complex relations between the codes of conduct presented in manuals of civility and the social milieu of court and city. See too, E. Goffman, *Frame Analysis* and *Interaction Ritual.*

[142]A. Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility*, p. 81.

[143]F. Whigham, *Ambition & Privilege*, p. 96. Whigham acknowledges his debt to Goffman's "Where the Action Is," *Interaction Ritual*, pp. 218-226.

[144]Taken from Sir Matthew Hale, *Advice to his Grandchildren*, in Rev. T. Thirwall (ed.), *The Works, Moral and Religious, Sir Matthew Hale....*(London,1816 edition), vol. I, p. 118; quoted in J. W. Mason, *Gentlefolk*, p. 81. Other aspects of civil behaviour were dealt with under topics such as conversation, the art of letter writing and country pursuits and pastimes.

[145]H. C. Foxcroft (ed.), *Life and Letters of Sir George Savile* (London, 1898), vol. 2, p. 408. Savile suggests that the wise wife will study her husband's temperament and turns his faults to her own advantage. R. Brathwait, *English Gentlewoman*, states that "the apparel [is] most comely, which confers on the Wearer most native beauty, and most honour on her Countrey," quoted in J. W. Mason, *Gentlefolk*, p. 140.

[146]F. Whigham, *Ambition & Privilege*, p. 186.

[147]A. Shepard, "Manhood," p. 95.

debates surrounding gender and reputation should avoid a binary framework — female to male, private to public, passive to active, nor individual to collective.[148] Instead, the focus should be on the cooperative relationships that existed between men and women, as seen by the conduct literature and the practice of everyday behaviour.[149]

The construction and daily projection of social identity was responsive to context. Social networks, whether local or in the wider world of metropolitan society, were central to upholding one's reputation and honour. "The key attribute in the successful projection of gentle status upon slightly uncertain social foundations was to be aware of these contexts, and responsive to them."[150] This is not unlike the patriarchal system we looked at in Chapter 3, wherein the structure as well as the individual had agency to modify behaviours to fit the situation. Placing this preceding discussion of self, identity and everyday behaviour, we can learn through the recorded incidents of family life about "the constraints with which they were obliged to cope; the opportunities afforded them to exercise preferences; the strategies which they adopted in response."[151] It is important to note that behaviour and context correspond to different levels of society, for "honour was only at stake between equals; reputation was at stake with everyone."[152] "Publicly undermining a woman's authority within her household and, by extension, her standing outside it, was in part an assault upon her honour."[153] Furthermore, men and women acted together to protect the reputation of the Household when their economic and social credit was undermined.[154] Blurring the private and public spheres demonstrates how the notions of male and female honour, rather than masculinity and femininity as such, have been shown to be compatible and in some ways very similar. We need no longer follow the tragic narrative which assumes that "a model of domestic femininity was *actively imposed* on women, who experiences

[148]G. Walker, "Expanding the Boundaries of Female Honour, p. 235.

[149]The conduct book writers as well as educated men and women recognized the Classical influences in the writing. For instance, in 1529, Juan Luis Vives writing in England published *De officio mariti*, a companion work to his *De instituione feminae christianae*, explicitly stated he was indebted to Xenophon for his writings on domestic conduct; S. B. Pomeroy, *Xenophon*, p. 79.

[150]H. R. French, 'Ingenious & learned gentlemen,' p. 64.

[151]K. Wrightson, "Three Approaches to Social History," in L. Bonfield *et al* (eds.), *The World We Have Gained* (Oxford, 1986), p. 185.

[152]A. J. Fletcher, "Honour, Reputation and Local Officeholding in Elizabethan and Stuart England," in A. J. Fletcher, J. Stevenson (eds.), *Order and Disorder*, p. 110. As an example, with regards to the Stuart militia, this institution of local government rested entirely on the ability of influential men in the provinces to command respect and obedience. This is interesting that such an important institution rested on such a fragile and mutable concept, p. 108.

[153]G. Walker, "Expanding the Boundaries," p. 240.

[154]"Household honour was not simply the preserve of the head of each household; it concerned both women and men, *Ibid.*, p. 242.

feelings of entrapment of such strength that they were led fiercely to resist their containment."[155]

[155]A. Vickery, "Golden Age to Separate Spheres?, p. 392.

Conclusion

> *"It is certainly apparent that wives had a part to play in some of the most significant - and therefore most often recorded — decisions of the family cycle"*[1]

There exists a number of approaches to the study of history and this thesis has suggested a rather innovative one to understanding 'Household' in seventeenth-century England. Specifically, the methodological and theoretical framework was designed to proffer some statements about gentlewomen's activity within the *institution*, taken in its broadest meaning. The existing historiography has left gaps in the understanding of the issues of agency and activity of women during this period. It was necessary to transcend disciplinary boundaries to address these shortcomings. I have achieved this by using various theoretical tools to form the basis for my analysis. A comprehensive theoretical framework allows the analysis to be situated within its rightful social, cultural and political context. This synthesis has proved to be a cogent way to interpret and understand the theoretical model and the empirical material. Clearly, it is to our advantage as historians to use all the available resources when we approach any study. According to Keith Thomas, it is crucial to include anthropology, sociology, psychology, literary criticism and philosophy in historical analyses. Moreover, the historian must keep up with what is going on in other intellectual spheres or his working set of assumptions is bound to get out of date.[2] If the object of history is to "enhance human self-consciousness, to make people more aware and to see themselves in perspective," then using an integrated theoretical model is the only viable means to achieve that aim.

Particularly helpful to this thesis has been the application of a sociological structuration theory because of the way it explains the relationships between individuals and institutions. And the understanding that comes from such an approach reveals not only the individual in their own local environment but also their role in society as a whole. In this way, the individual is shaped by the society they live in as well as being an active agent in shaping society.[3] Meaning and understanding is best extracted from the context: place, time, speaker, hearer and situation. Therefore, to avoid 'unhistorical' studies we must balance the approach of structure and individual.[4] 'Household' must be assessed according to its structure, the variance allowed within

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[1] K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, p. 65.
[2] Dr. F. Brooks, "Interview with Keith Thomas," *Historical Assoc. Australian Bulletin* 36 (1983), p. 26; for a similar opinion see, R. Houston and R. Smith, "A New Approach to Family History?", p. 129.
[3] I. Cohen, "Structuration Theory & Social Praxis," A. Giddens and J. Turner (eds.) *Social Theory Today*, (Stanford, 1987), pp. 288, 297.
[4] P. Burke, *History and Social Theory*, p. 112.

it by the individuals that occupy the structure, and the relationships and social values that infuse it with meaning and sustain it. Households were vast institutions in the seventeenth-century, thus they commanded a great deal of attention and resources.

Sociological and anthropological theories are useful in the way they address the inherent problem in much scholarship concerning women's agency, that is, the gap between the ideal and the real. Especially when it comes to looking at terms such as 'patriarchy', a sociological-historical model offers ways to understand the dynamics of relationships that functioned within society. Unfortunately, "the twentieth-century interpretation of domestic life in seventeenth-century England restricts the activities of the patriarch's wife more than the actual practice did."[5] Men *and* women had equal responsibilities towards their own and their respective families. If we can apply the same model of analysis in looking at their respective roles then we see that women were active in all 'spheres' of 'Household'. No division between 'public' and 'private' existed in seventeenth-century society. Hence, the notion of 'Household' as either a 'public' or 'private' sphere is irrelevant because *it* was the most fundamental sphere of all.[6]

Networks formed the basis for relationships in early modern society. It is evident from the empirical material that women were active in creating, developing and sustaining extensive 'webs' of these networks. The empirical cache of material I used has made it possible to recognize and articulate the considerable variety, flexibility, and ambivalence of social relations rather than to explain them away.[7] The activity of 'networking' was an essential means of shaping an identity because identity was not merely formed in a 'body' but in visible, communal, constitutive relationships. This analysis of those relationships is significant to wider historical debates dealing with broad themes such as the nature of cultural authority, identity and gender constructs, social order and stability and codes of conduct and behaviour. Women were active agents. They had the ability to make choices within the structure of society and this is relevant because authority was always socially constructed.[8] Whether they exercised their ability had more to do with their personality and level of capability than with their gender. The construction of an identity is related to agency, too, because of the degree of individual autonomy associated with it. For example, in marriage, a great deal of variation existed between different women as to the

[5]M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife*, states "the patriarchal system contain[ed] within it the necessary structures for mitigation" (p. 162).
[6]K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, p. 29.
[7]K. Wrightson, "The Social Order," p. 201.
[8]S. Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, p. 187.

level of 'partnership' that formed the basis for the day-to-day relationship.[9] The fashioning of oneself and the 'being' fashioned by cultural institutions were intertwined, in fact, inseparable.[10]

Throughout this thesis, we have been able to see how women in the seventeenth-century were expected to *perform* a number of roles and to accept the responsibilities associated with managing a Household. They were not only spheres of reciprocal obligation but also of authority.[11] It did not matter whether this woman was single, married, or widowed; she still had to tend to the business of her Household and that of her family.[12] She did this in an active way, by identifying her resources and then using various strategies in an effort to deploy them. Women were at once daughters, sisters, mothers, partners and managers of these vast institutions.[13] Politics, economics, and culture all converged on and diverged from the Household because of this intersection of individuals and institutions.[14] This study has allowed us to see individuals 'in the round' and it is under this microscope that people become a synthesis of ideas, values, norms and modes of life actions.[15] Most significantly, 'Household' performed a primary generative function in early modern society.

I have demonstrated that 'Household' is a useful and viable analytic category in understanding gentlewomen's activity in seventeenth-century England. Analysing 'Household' as an institution has provided the opportunity for learning about the interplay of identity and agency. It has gone beyond the four walls of 'house and family' studies and it has shown how 'Household' can be seen as a theatre of social performance and interaction. By utilizing a comprehensive approach to this study, I have revealed the need for an ideological paradigm shift with regards to all the sub-topics that converge on the study of 'Household'. This shift solves a number of historiographical problems in the scholarship, namely, periodization issues dealing with teleology of women's oppression, the critique of doing only 'elitist' history and the narrowness of doing only case or local studies. Studying 'Household' has made it possible to

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[9]S. Mendelson and P. Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England*, explain that women's experiences were so various, influenced by so many factors, that generalization is impossible (p. 149).
[10]S. Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 1980), p. 256.
[11]*Ibid.*
[12]D. Harkness, "Managing an Experimental Household," p. 248.
[13]Some of the earlier general references to women and their roles in the household include: A. T. Freidman, *House and Household*; S. Cahn, *Industry of Devotion: The Transformation of Women's Work in England, 1500-1660* (New York, 1987); A. Laurence, *Women in England*, pp. 108-124.
[14]As K. Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, states "as working units, all households were spheres of interdependence. Their maintenance and survival depended on the contributions of all their members" (p. 42), both inside the structure (the house, the estates) and beyond it.
[15]J. Gouldsblom, "The Sociology of Norbert Elias," p. 330.

redress the imbalance (real or perceived) of how women's contributions are concerned. Furthermore, it has illustrated the *de facto* executive role that women had in early modern society and the identifiable contributions that were hers to make.

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